





## Lebanese army intervenes after rival Shiite groups wound two people

BEIRUT (AP) — Troops intervened after a shoot-out between rival Shiite Muslim groups wounded two persons in Lebanon's capital on Friday night.

A statement issued by the Lebanese army said rivalry between the two groups, Hizbollah and Amal, degenerated into shooting at 8 p.m. in the districts of Khandaq Al Gharniq and Zukak Bullat.

The two groups, who are contesting staggered local elections that begin May 24, both have members of parliament and guerrilla factions.

Two people were wounded, the army said. Soldiers restored order and raided nearby houses in search of gunmen, the statement added.

Gunfights in the street, a hallmark of Lebanon's civil

war of 1975-90, have been rare since the army fanned out across the country at the end of the war and militias were disarmed and disbanded.

The army's swift action Friday suggests the government is determined to make sure the lawlessness of the war does not return.

Hizbollah and the more moderate Amal vie for the

support of Lebanon's 1.2 million Shiites, the largest sect. The leader of Amal is the parliamentary speaker, Nabih Berri.

After the war, the two groups were allowed to retain their weapons on the understanding they would use them to fight Israeli forces in the zone that Israel occupies in southern Lebanon.

## 20 wounded in Algerian attack

ALGIERS (AFP) — Twenty people have been wounded, three seriously, in a bomb blast west of the Algerian capital, newspaper reports said Saturday.

The attack took place Wednesday at Hadjout, the privately owned papers said, adding that a second bomb exploded a short

time later without causing any casualties.

In separate incidents over the last few days, at least 10 armed Islamists were killed by security forces at Tlemcen, Tizi-Ouzou, Boumerdes and Al Affroun. Papers gave different tolls for the clashes. Islamists launched an

insurgency in Algeria after the January 1992 cancellation of general elections the now outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

Western and humanitarian sources estimate the subsequent violence has claimed some 70,000 lives.

## UAE set to buy 80 U.S. fighter jets in deal worth up to \$8 billion

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates is set to announce next week an order worth up to \$8 billion for 80 fighter jets from U.S. defence giant Lockheed Martin. UAE officials and diplomats here said Saturday.

The U.S. order, worth between \$6 billion and \$8 billion, will more than double the size of the UAE's air force, which consists mainly of French and British fighters.

Sheikh Khalifa, deputy commander of the armed forces, is due to meet U.S. President Bill Clinton on Tuesday but UAE officials said the fighter deal was unlikely to be signed during his three-day visit as final details would have to be worked out.

His brother, army chief of staff Sheikh Mohammad Ben Zayed Al Nahayan, is to accompany him on the trip. Sheikh Mohammad, who is in charge of Abu Dhabi's military procurements, has visited Washington at least twice over the past year to discuss the fighter deal.

Lockheed's two other rivals were the French Dassault's Rafale and the Eurofighter, which is built by a European consortium led by British Aerospace and Daimler Benz of Germany.

## German delegation in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — A German diplomatic mission arrived in Iran Saturday on a bid to ease tension between the two countries which has heightened over the sentencing to death of a German national here for an illicit sexual affair.

Peter Dingsen, the director general of the German foreign ministry's Middle East department, and Wolf-Rüdiger Born, the director-general of consular affairs, will hold talks with Iranian officials, a German diplomat said.

Relations took a sour turn in January after Bonn announced the arrest and conviction to death of German businessman Helmut Hofer for an alleged sexual affair with an Iranian Muslim woman.

## Turkey unhappy at German FM's comments on Cyprus

ANKARA (AFP) — Germany's ambassador was summoned to the Turkish foreign ministry to explain remarks reportedly made by German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel about northern Cyprus, the Hurriyet newspaper reported Saturday.

Hurriyet said the Turkish authorities were unhappy about comments made by Mr. Kinkel in Strasbourg earlier this week, reportedly saying that Turkey "occupied" northern Cyprus in defiance of international law.

The paper said Ambassador Hans-Joachim Verga was given a dressing down over Mr. Kinkel's comments.

Turkey insists its invasion of Cyprus in 1974 was in conformity with its status as a guarantor power on

the island as enshrined in the 1960 treaty giving Cyprus independence from Britain.

The 1974 invasion was triggered by a Greek nationalist coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting the island with Greece, with Turkey insisting its move was aimed at protecting the ethnic Turkish community on the island.

The island has been divided into Greek and Turkish sectors for the past 24 years, with an estimated 35,000 Turkish soldiers controlling the northern third.

Relations between Germany and Turkey have been strained since a European Union (EU) summit in December last year decided to exclude Turkey from the next phase of the enlargement of the EU.

## Lebanon protests to truce panel over injuries from Israeli shelling

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanon filed on Saturday a complaint to the international truce monitoring committee over Israeli shelling that wounded seven Lebanese civilians, a government official said.

Lebanon considered the Israeli shelling a violation to the April 1996 ceasefire accord which banned combatants from targeting civilians or launching attacks from civilian areas, he said.

Seven Lebanese civilians, including three children, were wounded Friday in Israeli bombardments on the villages of Mansouri and Yater, just outside the Israeli-occupied border zone in southern Lebanon, police said.

The truce committee — made up of representatives from France, Israel, Syria, Lebanon and the United States — was set up to oversee the April 1996 agreement.

Ten Lebanese civilians have been killed and 39 others wounded in the violence in southern Lebanon this year.



A Palestinian child Saturday holds a flag of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in front of a poster of its spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin during a rally in the West Bank town of Hebron. Hamas officials slammed the concessions made by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in the peace process, which they called the latest "nakba" (catastrophe) to hit the Palestinian people (AFP photo)

## Hamas calls Oslo peace process latest 'nakba' for Palestinians

HEBRON (AFP) — Some 1,000 supporters of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, rallied here on Saturday, branding President Yasser Arafat's peace deals with Israel the latest "catastrophe" in Palestinian history.

"The Palestinians have undergone many Nakba [catastrophes] in their history, and the latest is the signing of the Oslo accords, which gave legitimacy to the rapists of our land," Hamas official

Nayef Rajub told the crowd in a speech.

"Nakba" is the term Palestinians use for the 1948 war which surrounded the creation of Israel and which led to the loss of Palestinian lands and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Mr. Rajub slammed the Palestinian leader's acceptance of U.S. proposals that Israel withdraw from 13.1 per cent of the West Bank.

"This is just another in a long line of concessions. The Palestinian Authority has conceded - 80 - per cent of Palestine. How long will these concessions go on," Mr. Rajub said.

Hamas called the rally to mark the "Tijra" or flight of the Muslim Prophet Mohammad from Mecca to Medina, but it was dominated by commemorations of the Nakba, which Palestinians mark on May 15.

## Malaysian prime minister urges religious tolerance for Islam

CAIRO (AP) — Tolerance has fostered multi-ethnic Malaysia's economic growth, and is the key for Islam to erase the Western misconception that all Muslims are terrorists, Malaysia's prime minister said Saturday.

"So far we have failed" to be completely tolerant, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad, a Sunni Muslim, said in a speech

at Al Azhar University, the world's oldest seat of Islamic learning.

This is due to "our own faults" from our failure to adhere to the teachings of Islam," he said. Mr. Mahathir, who is here to attend a summit of developing nations, spoke after receiving an honorary doctorate from the university.

Students sat segregated, with most of the women in the balcony. Many men wore white prayer caps while women covered their hair with scarves.

Mr. Mahathir said Islam has its fair share of "black sheep," the terrorists who slaughter Muslims and non-Muslims, such as those in Algeria and Egypt.

## Middle East's second largest dam inaugurated in S. Arabia

RIYADH (AP) — Crown Prince Abdullah inaugurated the Middle East's second largest dam on Saturday, Saudi television reported.

The King Fahd Dam in Beesha, 1,000 kilometres southwest of Riyadh, has a capacity of 325 million cubic meters of water, making it second only to Egypt's Aswan High Dam

## German woman wounded in attack returns to Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — A German woman wounded in an attack in Cairo that killed nine tourists and their Egyptian bus driver returned to the city Saturday with a financial donation for the bus driver's family.

Gudrun Hoppe's husband was among the nine Germans killed last September when two brothers, in a brazen midday attack, fire-bombed a tourist bus outside the Egyptian Museum, then stormed it, opening fire on a tour group.

Ms. Hoppe, who came with a German television crew, said she would present the family of deceased bus driver Ramadan Afifi with \$9,700.

The money was collected from German families, she said, as a symbol of their "love for other people, especially Egyptians." During her four-day visit to Egypt, Ms. Hoppe and the television crew will go to Luxor at the invitation of Egypt's Investment Authority.

Two brothers — one a failed pop musician put in a mental institution after a 1993 triple murder of foreigners — were sentenced to death by a military court for the bus attack.

The brothers said that the attack was carried out in revenge for a drawing done by an Israeli woman depicting the Islamic Prophet Mohammad as a pig.

Along with the fatalities, the attack left another 26 injured and shook Egypt's vital tourism industry, on the rebound in recent years after militant attacks drove away foreigners.

A month after the museum attack, tourism suffered a more damaging blow to tourism when six militants massacred 58 tourists and four Egyptians at an ancient Pharaonic temple in the southern town of Luxor. The six attackers were killed.

## JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

### PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — Pumpkin Patch  
15:30 Cartoon — The Pink Panther  
15:30 ..... Skippy  
16:00 The American Chart Show  
17:00 ..... In The Wild  
18:00 ..... French Programme  
19:00 ..... Le Journal  
19:15 French Programme — Science Magazine  
19:30 ..... News Headlines  
19:35 Life's Most Embarrassing Moments  
20:00 Documentary — The People and Places of Africa  
20:30 Talk Show — Challenges  
21:10 ..... Drama — Renegade  
22:00 ..... News in English  
22:30 ..... Correlli — Rat Timer  
23:59 ..... Comedy — The Nanny

### PRAYER TIMES

04:10 ..... Fajr  
05:38 ..... (Sunrise) Duha  
12:32 ..... Dhuhur  
16:12 ..... 'Asr  
19:26 ..... Maghreb  
20:53 ..... 'Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel.

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Temperatures are expected to drop slightly but remaining higher than average but about four degrees centigrade. It will be dusty, cloudy appearing at different altitudes, with a chance of scattered showers, and winds southwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be dusty, cloudy with a chance of thunder showers, winds northerly active, and seas choppy.

Min/Max temp.  
Amman ..... 19/31  
Aqaba ..... 24/34  
Deserts ..... 17/32  
Jordan Valley ..... 24/35

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 34, Aqaba 30 Humidity readings: Amman 42 per cent, Aqaba 80 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Mukles Halaseh ..... 5519230  
Dr. Rudi Sukkar ..... 5856457  
Dr. Fadi Al Khadib ..... 5865456  
Dr. Ghazi Abu Shikhab ..... 752405

Firas pharmacy ..... 5661912  
Ferdows pharmacy ..... 778336  
Al Aserna pharmacy ..... 4637055  
Nairoukh pharmacy ..... 4623672  
Al Salam pharmacy ..... 4636730  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 4644945  
Shmeisani pharmacy ..... 4637660  
Najib pharmacy ..... 847632  
IRBID:  
Dr. Farzi Abdul Hais ..... 252970  
Al Quds pharmacy ..... (—)  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Fahed Jabir ..... 984549  
Khalifeh pharmacy ..... 985417

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 4637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 5661111  
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ..... 4630341  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199  
Rescue Police 192 ..... 4621111  
Fire Brigade ..... 4617101  
Blood Bank ..... 775121  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 896390  
Public Security Dept. .... 4630321  
Hotel Complaints ..... 5605800  
Price Complaints ..... 5661176  
Water & Sewerage Complaints ..... 897467  
Amman Municipality Complaints ..... 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone

Repairs ..... 4623101  
Abdali Tel. Repairs ..... 5661101  
Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 5680109  
J. Electricity Authority ..... 815615  
Electric Power Co. .... 4636381  
RJ Flight Information ..... 44-53200  
Queen Alia Int. Airport ..... 44-53200

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199  
The Islamic, Abdl ..... 5666131/7  
Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 836813.  
856856  
Luzmila ..... 4630195  
Khalidi Maternity ..... 4642411/2  
Akileh Maternity ..... 4642441/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 4642362  
Malhas, J. Amman ..... 4636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 5607071  
Shmeisani Hospital ..... 5669131  
University Hospital ..... 5333444  
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667277/9  
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 5664164/6  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3  
Al-Bashir ..... 775111/26  
Army, Marka ..... 891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital 560240/50  
Amal Hospital ..... 5674155

ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital ..... 09900560  
Rbn Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..... (09)990990  
IRBID:  
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)372275  
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ..... (02)347100

### FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44) 53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone (44) (52700)

### ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
09:30 ..... Jeddah (RJ)  
09:45 ..... Larnaca (RJ)

### DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:30 ..... Larnaca (RJ)  
06:45 ..... Beirut (RJ)  
09:15 ..... Frankfurt, Berlin (RJ)  
11:30 ..... Athens, Rome (RJ)  
12:00 ..... Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)  
12:15 ..... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)  
12:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)  
13:20 ..... London (RJ)  
21:00 ..... New Delhi (RJ)  
21:10 ..... Cairo (RJ)  
21:20 ..... Jeddah (RJ)  
21:40 ..... Damascus (RJ)  
22:00 ..... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)  
22:40 ..... Bangkok (RJ)  
23:40 ..... Sanaa (RJ)  
00:30 ..... Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

Other Flights  
06:30 ..... Tel Aviv (LA)  
11:00 ..... Sanaa, Ta'iz (TY)  
12:30 ..... Jeddah (SV)  
12:50 ..... Moscow (SU)  
13:30 ..... Abu Dhabi (GF)  
15:40 ..... Doha (QR)  
19:00 ..... Paris (AF)  
20:25 ..... Tel Aviv (LA)  
21:40 ..... Cairo (MS)  
22:20 ..... Istanbul (TK)  
23:35 ..... Larnaca (CY)  
23:40 ..... Beirut (ME)  
01:15 ..... Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)  
04:15 ..... London (BA)

Royal Wings (RW)  
10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport (RW)  
10:35 ..... Tel Aviv (QAIA) (RW)  
23:25 ..... Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

### what's going on

AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL  
Local performances by the American National Music Center at the Jordan Cultural Centre, Monday, May 11, at 8 p.m.  
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CONCERT  
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## Home News

## Queen delivers World Red Cross award

INTERNATIONAL — Her Majesty Queen Neveen Sababheh gave the keynote address at the first annual World Red Cross Day ceremony in London on the eve of the Queen's Jubilee.

The Queen, who was accompanied by Prince Faisal bin Al Hussein, arrived in London on Saturday for a three-day visit. During her stay, she will be joined by the King of Jordan, King Hussein, and the Queen Mother, Queen Alia. The Queen will be in London for a total of five days, during which she will attend a number of official engagements and will also have a private audience with the Prime Minister, Mr. John Major.

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## Queen delivers keynote address on World Red Cross/Crescent Day

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor on Saturday gave the keynote address at the first annual World Red Cross/Crescent Day, which was held in Amman on the occasion of World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, according to a press release.

Jordan, according to the Queen, has had a "close and fruitful relationship with the Red Cross/Red Crescent since 1948 with the founding of our national Red Crescent Society." The Queen said the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) established its regional headquarters in Amman as a base of operations for a wide range of activities in the Middle East that include "disaster relief efforts such as building emergency supply stocks in southern Lebanon, rehabilitation projects for the victims of the recent earthquakes in the Balkans, and community projects such as maternity hospitals in Egypt, and job creation programmes and children's toy libraries for the disabled in the West Bank."

She added that "equally important are the ongoing efforts to introduce principles of humanitarian law into the curriculum of the countries of the region, as well as into school curricula."

International humanitarian law is known as the law of war and mainly focuses on protecting the wounded and the sick in armed forces, prisoners of war and civilians during armed conflicts. Queen Noor noted that many of the provisions of this law were inspired by the teachings of Islam.

"Islam called for treating prisoners in a dignified manner, providing them with adequate food and clothing, and after the cessation of warfare, to set them free, unconditionally or against a ransom. Treachery and violence against non-combatants, especially women, children and the elderly, were prohibited," she said.

These moral dictates were scrupulously observed by Islam's greatest leaders, such as Caliph Abu Bakr, who "ordered his troops to refrain from attacking civilians, and religious sites, and from destroying trees and gardens" and Salah Al Din's noble and generous treatment of his opponents and non-combatants, Queen Noor added.

Queen Noor noted that in today's world order, war could arise from "poverty and disaffection. Violence takes root in people who feel pushed to extremes, hopeless,

diseased, and no amount of military might can provide full protection against it." She added that "our challenge is to define a new concept of humanitarian law based on mutual respect and concern."

According to the Queen, the United Nations has taken a leading role in promoting a new international framework for policy setting. Each U.N. conference has emphasised certain fundamental principles for global progress: sustainable development, human rights, women's empowerment, and the full participation of people in decisions that affect their lives. "This consensus provided us with new global norms for more responsible and humane policy — a comprehensive framework for progress," she stated.

There are 176 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies throughout the world, including Jordan. Jordan's National Red Crescent Society was established in 1948 and its numerous achievements include the establishment of the Red Crescent hospital, vocational training, health education and first aid programmes, supporting homes for the elderly and the dissemination of International

Humanitarian Law, according to the statement.

Earlier, Queen Noor visited the British Red Cross headquarters in London where she was briefed on their international "Family Tracing and Messages" services, which works to restore and maintain contact between families during armed conflict or natural disasters by conveying messages and helping trace relatives who have gone missing. Queen Noor was shown some examples of how people from the Middle East have been put in contact with each other.

Queen Noor was also honoured by the Broderers Company, who made the Queen an honorary member of the city of London. According to the Master of the Company, this honour has only been accorded to two other people: Queen Margrethe of Denmark and the Duchess of Gloucester, Princess Alice. He added that Queen Noor was chosen by the Broderers for "her national and international work in the fields of education, child welfare, women and community development, environmental and architectural conservation, culture and heritage" and particularly for her "handicrafts revival and development."

## Ministry announces plans to set up shelter for abused women

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Social Development announced plans Saturday to set up the first centre in Jordan to shelter abused women, including those kept under protective custody in prisons.

Minister of Social Development Mohammad Khair Mamsar told the Jordan Times that the centre's creation follows recommendations issued at a workshop held in September that examined ways of protecting abused women in Jordan.

Participants at the seminar were told that between 30-40 women are in prisons because they have nowhere to go if released.

"The workshop helped us discover that there are many

women who are held in protective custody or simply cannot leave correctional centres because they have no place to go or their life would be endangered if they were released," Dr. Mamsar said.

Many women are forced to serve indefinite terms in the Kingdom's correctional facilities under what the state terms "administrative detention," but what is actually protection from being killed by family members.

Police records of the past 12 years show that crimes of honour have ranked highest among all murders committed in Jordan. Between 25 and 30 women are killed annually in the name of honour.

"It is our duty to help these women, and the entire project is aimed at rehabilitating

these women and helping them return to society easily and safely," Dr. Mamsar explained.

Dr. Mamsar added that the ministry is currently seeking to rent a house temporarily to determine if the project can work.

"This is an entirely new experience for us, and for the time being we are looking for a place to rent to house the abused women or women whose lives are threatened until the real centre is built," he said.

Dr. Mamsar added that the house will also host women who are subjected to any form of domestic violence.

A 1994 study conducted by the Public Security Department (PSD) indicated that there were 4,962 cases of domestic violence against

women registered with the police during 1991 and 1992.

"We will examine several solutions, such as trying to find possible partners for marriage, teaching them professions or trying to find jobs for them in order for them to mix easily into society," the minister said.

The project is being made possible through the collaboration of the Ministry of Social Development, the PSD, the Human Rights Forum for Women's Rights, and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

"A Jordanian expert is currently working to prepare a comprehensive proposal for the women's guest house, and the next step will be to find donors to help it see the light of day," Dr. Mamsar said.

## Fifteen public schools to receive free Internet time

By Ahmed Naser  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Fifteen public schools will receive free Web time and reduced-cost modems from National Equipment and Technical Services (NETS), an Internet Service Provider (ISP), the company's general manager said Saturday.

These schools will receive free Web time and access to NETS' Bulletin Board Service (BBS) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Marwan Juma told the Jordan Times.

The service is similar to a NETS' campaign earlier this year when home users were offered unlimited time between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m.

NETS will also sell a number of its asset modems, equipment that was used by the company itself, at reduced costs to schools that have computers but no modems, said Mr. Juma.

"We are working to ensure that His Majesty's wishes be fulfilled," said Mr. Juma, referring to His Majesty King Hussein's initiative earlier this month to make Hashem I, a satellite channel, available to public and private ISPs at reduced costs.

Earlier, Mr. Juma was quoted as saying that practical steps would be formulated to follow up on the initiative of the King to make the World Wide Web available to more, especially at the educational level.

Jordan's leading BBS will also offer free hands-on Internet training at their premises once a week to any public school teacher, said Mr. Juma.

"Providing free Internet time is one thing, but if there are no teachers to pass on the know-how to students, then it's useless," he added.

NETS has 1,800 Internet users out of its 3,400 BBS subscribers.

## Over 120,000 to receive JD26m in salary bonuses — Lawzi

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government Saturday announced that it will grant more than 120,000 members of the Armed Forces and other security agencies an extra month's salary, according to acting Minister of Information Nasser Lawzi.

Mr. Lawzi said the move comes in implementation of an order by His Majesty King Hussein earlier this month to grant members of the Armed Forces, General

Intelligence Department, Civil Defence Department and the police the bonus.

Mr. Lawzi stated that the payments will cost the treasury more than JD26 million. Pensioners and military retirees are not eligible for the bonus, nor are civil servants, he added.

"The government has ordered the Ministry of Finance to develop a mechanism to enable those eligible to receive the bonus by the end of the month," the minister said.

He said the additional

salaries will be paid according to the total salary of each employee, as was reported earlier in the media.

The official declined to say where the Ministry of Finance would draw the necessary funds or whether the government would resort to borrowing from local or foreign financial institutions.

The decision to grant the employees the extra month's salary coincided with the 45th anniversary of the King's assumption of his constitutional powers.

## Minister calls for stronger economic ties between Arab World, China

AMMAN (Petra) — Acting Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Munther Haddadin on Saturday opened the third meeting of the board of directors of the Arab-Chinese Chamber of Commerce with a call for stronger economic and trade ties between China and the Arab World.

Dr. Haddadin expressed hope that Arab countries and China would take major strides in bolstering trade exchanges and promoting bilateral cooperation in technology-related fields.

In his address to the opening session, Haddadin, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, said Jordan appreciates

China's political views on Arab causes, including the Palestine question and endeavours to lift the embargo on Iraq.

Mr. Murad said Jordan was looking forward to new scopes of cooperation between the Arabs and the Chinese to build on the historical links between the two groups.

Jordan has established a strong foundation of cooperation with China in trade, he said, noting that last year the Kingdom exported JD14 million worth of products to Chinese markets and imported JD72 million worth of Chinese goods.

Over the past few years, Jordan has created the appropriate

climate for foreign investments and has built infrastructure to pave the way for new enterprises and joint ventures.

Adnan Qsar, chairperson of the Arab Chambers of Industry, Trade and Agriculture (ACITA), spoke of the need for removing barriers still hampering trade and enhancing the globalisation of trade. He also called on China to enter into joint ventures in the Arab World to increase trade exchanges.

Burhan Dajani, ACITA secretary general, said privatisation in Arab countries is expected to further bolster Arab-Chinese relations and strengthen bilateral trade.

## Dentists' union elects new president

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Dentists Association (JDA) on Friday elected Ahmad Qaderi as the next JDA president for the next two years, succeeding former chief Sa'ad Abu Maizar.

Dr. Qaderi received 644 votes against 447 for his only competitor, Hanih Najj. Out of 3,300 registered dentists, only 1,115 were eligible to vote since they had paid their association dues and membership fees.

The JDA also elected nine members to the board out of 21 candidates, according to association sources, who noted that the board also has a two-year mandate ending in

2000.

After his election, Dr. Qaderi delivered a brief address thanking voters and pledging to work for all dentists and help promote the status and the role of the JDA.

Before the elections, Dr. Qaderi said that if elected he would give due attention to helping graduates and unemployed dentists find jobs and would try to set a minimum salary for dentists, especially those working in the public sector.

"We will be cooperating with the government to make it compulsory for companies and organisations to arrange for the appointment of dentists

for their staff," he said.

Dr. Qaderi voiced his opposition to the termination of the association's savings and health insurance and pensions funds, adding that he would resist any attempt by any party to interfere with these funds.

The new JDA president said he would be working with the board to arrange training courses for the benefit of new dentists.

Prior to the elections, the JDA general assembly reviewed and endorsed reports on the association's financial and administrative performance, the balance sheet, and the 1998 financial situation.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Amman area phone number changes to be completed by July

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) announced Saturday that the renumbering of telephone numbers in the Amman region from six to seven digits will be completed by the end of July. According to a report in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i, JTC board chairman Walid Dweik said the company's next step would be to issue a new telephone directory listing 270,000 numbers. The present directory was issued in 1995. The number of telephone lines in the Kingdom was expected to rise to 500,000 from the present 425,000 by the end of the year, he said.

Jordanian-Palestinian meeting ends

AMMAN (Petra) — A joint Jordanian-Palestinian public works committee concluded its meeting Saturday with an agreement under which Jordan will perform a feasibility study on the construction of the Wadi Al Nar Road in the West Bank. Jordan and Palestine also agreed on performing studies related to the construction of public departments, schools and health centres in the West Bank, according to Ministry of Public Works and Housing Secretary General Bashir Jaghbeer. The two sides also agreed on providing Palestinians with training courses in Jordan.



PRINCESS BASMA OPENS EXHIBITION: Her Royal Highness Princess Basma opens the second spring exhibition organised by Bayt Al Bawadi, which is affiliated to the Queen Alia Fund. Princess Basma toured the exhibition, which consists of artefacts, embroidery, pottery and other artistic works (Petra photo)

## Housekeeper to be buried today after three-week ordeal

By Dima Hamdan  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The body of an impoverished Sri Lankan housekeeper, who died from a heart attack last month, will be laid to rest at Amman's Sahab Cemetery today after Colombo ended three weeks of wrangling by agreeing to shoulder the cost of her burial.

The niece of Rukmuna Kalivachidona, a door-to-door domestic helper who died three weeks ago, turned to the Sri Lankan embassy for help after her family sent her written permission to bury her aunt in Amman because they could not afford the

expense of transporting the body back to Colombo.

The Jordanian employer of the niece, in a letter to the Jordan Times on Wednesday, had charged that the embassy was not showing any cooperation and told her they had no funds to help bury her in Jordan. Hence, the employer turned to the Internet to publicise the situation.

"Finally, the phone rang this morning and an embassy official confirmed to the niece that the burial would take place on Sunday after the embassy received funds from Sri Lanka," said a source close to the niece.

The embassy confirmed to the Jordan Times that they had received the money and that the burial would take place on Sunday.

Over 25,000 Sri Lankans work in Jordan, mostly as domestic helpers earning a minimum of JD60 a month. Many of them have often complained of abuse by their employers, such as working for 19 hours a day non-stop.

If a Sri Lankan dies abroad, his/her family are responsible for transporting the body back home. If the family cannot pay, then the government assumes responsibility.

### what's going on

**AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL**

\* Classical guitar concert by Jad Azkoul at the American Center, Amman on Monday, May 11, at 7:00 p.m.

**CONCERT**

\* Musical performance by the students of the National Music Conservatory at the Royal Cultural Centre, on Monday, May 11, at 8:00 p.m.

\* Lecture entitled "Lorca's music as a guitar concert" by Rafael Serrallles, at the Union Bank Hall at 8:00 p.m. (Another performance will be held at Instituto Cervantes, Jabel Amman, on Monday, May 11, at 8:00 p.m.)

**SPRING FAIR**

\* Spring collection of ceramic items and rugs at Beit Al Bawadi showroom, Abdoun (Tel. 5925841/5930070), until May 24.

**LECTURE/EXHIBITION/CONCERT**

\* "Lorca on el Mundo Árabe" by Dr. Mahmoud Makki and Dr. Ahmad Abdul Aziz at Instituto Cervantes, Jabel Amman on Monday, May 11, at 5:00 p.m. (to be followed by a photo exhibition entitled "Frederico Garcia Lorca" and a book exhibition entitled "Lorca Translated Into Arabic" and later by a concert by guitarist Rafael Serrallles).

**ART SALE**

\* Sale of personal oil paintings of artist Muhammad Al Hashidi (at his residence), Debiyar Al Rashid, near Dawahi Hotel (Tel. 5134567).

## Classical guitarist to perform at arts festival

By Jean-Claude Elias  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor and at the invitation of the American Center at the American embassy, classical guitarist Jad Azkoul will perform on Monday and Wednesday as part of the American Arts Festival.

The American-Lebanese musician, now in his late 40s, started playing the guitar at 13. One particular aspect of his background is the diversity of the places where he has studied and taught, including Australia, Lebanon and the U.S., to name only those three. Among his teachers one can find great names like Lagoya — from the celebrat-

ed duo Alexandre Lagoya and Ida Presti — Nadia Boulanger and Abel Carlevaro.

The awards he has received, the publications in which he has participated, the positions he has held and the prestigious venues at which he has performed, including Jerash Festival a few years ago, are too many to be listed.

Mr. Azkoul belongs to the elite who have contributed to classical guitar's current status. The instrument was long considered "secondary," mainly because of its limited acoustic volume, but also because it was not officially recognised as an element of the symphonic orchestra. The "Concerto de Aranjuez" by Joaquim Rodrigo was the first

major concerto for guitar and orchestra to gain world-wide popularity.

Describing Mr. Azkoul's ability, the Washington Post wrote in May 1995: "He can make his instrument sing... with the occasional accents and hesitations of the human voice." The tone of the classical guitar is one of the most delicate to manipulate, but Mr. Azkoul seems to have mastered this essential aspect of the technique.

Monday's programme will feature works by Heitor Villa-Lobos, Abel Carlevaro, Antonio Lauro and Lourival Silvestre. Wednesday's concert will feature Mr. Azkoul performing with award-winning Jordanian oud player Sakher Hamar.

## Cabinet endorses British grant memo on developing financial market

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet on Saturday endorsed a memorandum of understanding to be signed by Jordan and Britain on financing the development of the Amman Financial Market over the coming two years.

The estimated JD1.41 million project will be funded as a grant under the British technical aid programme to Jordan. Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf has been authorised to sign the document on behalf of the government.

The Cabinet, which met in a regular session chaired by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, authorised Minister of Transport Sami Gammoh to sign a tender agreement for consulting services to be conducted by a Japanese firm on rehabilitating the railway line linking Amman and Zarqa.

The Council of Ministers formed a delegation led by Minister of Labour Muhammad Farhan to take part in the International Labour Organiza-

tion's 86th conference, to be held in Geneva from June 2-18. The delegation will also attend an Arab labour ministers' meeting prior to the conference to coordinate Arab positions on the conference's agenda.

A delegation led by Ibrahim Badran, director of the Palestine Affairs Department, was assembled to take part in the 60th meeting of a Palestinian refugees' council in Cairo between June 21 and 27.

The Council formed a delegation led by the secretary general of the Ministry of Health to take part in the Joint Jordanian-Algerian Committee meeting on trade and health affairs, due to be held in Algeria from May 30-June 6.

A delegation was formed from the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to take part in an international meeting on Jerusalem to be held in Tehran between May 19 and 29.



# Contact Group imposes embargo on Yugoslavia over Kosovo

LONDON (AFP) — The six-nation Contact Group, except Russia, has decided to slap an embargo on investments in Yugoslavia in response to the crack-down in the province of Kosovo. British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said Saturday.

It completes a series of measures to isolate the federal regime in Yugoslavia, he said.

The Contact Group on conflicts in the former Yugoslavia comprises Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the United States.

The ministers decided the tougher sanctions during a meeting in London of the Group of Eight industrial powers, which also includes Canada and Japan.

Their meeting was to prepare the ground for the G8 summit of the world's leading industrialised nations which takes place in Birmingham, central England, next week.

Canada approved the decision but Russia, a traditional ally of the Yugoslav government which is dominated by Serbia and embroiled in an increasingly violent crackdown in the ethnic-Albanian province of Kosovo, expressed reservations.

Japan said it would consider its international obligations before taking a decision, Mr. Cook said.

Mr. Cook said the contact group expressed its "deep concern" about the situation in Kosovo, dominated by ethnic Albanians, and was sharply critical of Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic.

At their last meeting in Rome on April 29, the Contact Group voted to freeze Yugoslav and Serb funds and warned they would block foreign investment if there was no meaningful progress in opening a

## Four die in Kosovo fighting

KOMORANE, Serbia (R) — Serbian police closed Kosovo's main east-west highway Saturday after fighting with separatist guerrillas in which at least three ethnic Albanians were killed in the last 24 hours, Albanian sources said.

The separatist guerrillas, a clan of an elderly shepherd in the village of Komorane Friday, shot at a police patrol which was on its way to the village.

Another policeman died a belt of copper cartridges into the back of a truck-mounted heavy machine gun.

Serbian authorities said a police patrol was ambushed at 0700 GMT Friday in Komorane, a village about 40 km west of Pristina. Three policemen were wounded in that attack and one ethnic Albanian was killed.

A second attack occurred along the highway at Balmes near Kopa, at 1300 GMT Friday, in which three more Serb policemen were wounded and several troop carriers were damaged.

The leading ethnic Albanian politician in Kosovo, Ibrahim Rugova, has urged his people to pursue a programme of non-violent protest against harsh rule from Belgrade.

"But many Kosovo Albanians, weary of arbitrary beatings and arrests at the hands of Serb police, and have taken up arms in recent months."

The cycle of violence has been slowly escalating in Kosovo since the end of February, causing international observers to worry about the possibility of a full-scale war in the Balkans that could involve not only Serbia, but Albania and Macedonia too.

Both neighbouring countries have substantial ethnic Albanian populations with a long interest in Kosovo's fate.

Western powers are anxious that Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic accept international mediation to resolve the Kosovo crisis, something he so far has refused to do.



Tibetans, who reside in neighbouring Nepal, shout slogans during a protest march outside the United Nations office in New Delhi. Nearly 50 took part in the protest to show their solidarity with five fellow activists who are on a fast-unto-death, seeking independence for their Tibetan homeland currently under Chinese occupation. The five activists began their hunger strike on April 28 and have vowed to continue their fast unless the United Nations reopens a debate on the future of Tibet. Some 100,000 Tibetans live in India under the guidance of their spiritual Buddhist leader, the Dalai Lama, who fled to India in 1959 (Reuters photo)

## Tibetan exiles picket U.N. office in New Delhi to demand independence

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Some 200 Tibetan exiles from Nepal demonstrated outside the U.N. office in New Delhi, Saturday calling for an end to Chinese rule in their homeland and an international probe into rights abuses there.

Witnesses said the protesters shouted anti-Chinese slogans and urged the United Nations to appoint a special envoy to determine the future of Tibet.

A statement by the Tibetan Welfare Association, based in Kathmandu, said the U.N. representative should "promote a peaceful settlement of the question of Tibet and initiate a U.N.-sponsored plebiscite to ascertain the wishes of the Tibetan people."

It also called for a "special rapporteur to investigate the situation of human rights in Chinese-occupied Tibet."

Late last month, a Tibetan monk immolated himself in New Delhi in the first suicide protest in India after police broke up a marathon hunger strike by six Tibetans aimed at demanding Tibetan independence. Five others have replaced them and were still fasting Saturday.

Chinese troops occupied Tibet in 1951. The Dalai Lama and some 100,000 Tibetans fled to India after Beijing crushed an anti-Chinese uprising in Tibet in 1959.

## Cambodians urged to 'vote their conscience'

KAMPONG SPEU, Cambodia (AFP) — Cambodian strongman Hun Sen Saturday urged voters to select candidates of their own choice in July's scheduled election and ignore, but report, any cases of harassment.

"Don't be afraid of anyone, just vote for whoever you love or like, that's what I ask for," the powerful second prime minister told villagers here southwest of the capital at a school inauguration.

"The main question is your decision who to vote for and what party you believe can bring your children a bright future."

Hun Sen also pleaded for partisan political campaigners not to use violence to get their message across or try to illegally influence the results of the July 26 election.

"Don't throw stones at each other, don't fire catapults at one another no matter what any party says during the campaign," he said. "There must be a guarantee (that the election) will be free of intimidation and threats."

All parties must enjoy the opportunity to campaign... We must do whatever we can to prevent people from dying during the election."

He added that while voters should ignore any attempt to unduly influence their ballots, they should report any such incidents to the authorities who would punish the violators.

Human rights groups and others have warned that violence and intimidation threaten the credibility of the election, especially following Hun Sen's ouster last year of co-Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

About 100 royalist supporters have been killed since he was ousted, according to the U.N. Centre for Human Rights and no one has yet been brought to justice for the murders.

The international community, which has called for the deaths to be investigated, has also pressured Phnom Penh to allow Prince Ranariddh, whose party won historic U.N.-brokered polls in 1993, to return from exile and participate in the election.

The prince's opposition alliance has threatened to boycott the polls unless they are convinced the environment will be truly free and fair.

While it remains unclear whether they will follow through with the threat, they have thus far met all registration deadlines for the elections.

Voter registration is to begin on May 18.

## Hindu nationalists, allies meet to resolve disputes

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Hindu nationalist leaders met Saturday to discuss ways to resolve disputes threatening the multi-party alliance.

An official of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said the meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee at his official residence.

The nationalist BJP-led coalition has been wracked by a series of withdrawals of support, increasing demands from regional partners and corruption allegations which have led to the sacking of two cabinet ministers.

Saturday's meeting was the first gathering of the BJP and its allies since the government was formed in March. An official called it a "check-up".

The Hindu Times newspaper published the meeting would see demands for more cabinet seats and an expected cabinet expansion.

Home Minister and outgoing BJP President Lal Krishna Advani, the number two in the cabinet, recently admitted that government had endured a "period of much pain" in its first months.

He said, however, that the "pains and tribulations" had made the government more determined to "strengthen ourselves."

The Hindu nationalists emerged as the largest bloc in India's ruling parliament after last year's February-March elections and had to win over several dozen regional parties.

The BJP had campaigned on a pledge of a "new era" of governance since 1996.

The government faced its first crisis last month when a regional politician from southern India, Jayalalitha Jayaram, demanded the resignation of several ministers over their alleged involvement in the state's financial crisis.

She demanded the support of all members of parliament within the 24-seat coalition and could have brought down the government by switching to the equally fragmented opposition.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was forced to sack his communications minister to placate Ms. Jayaram, who also wants the premier to dismiss the provincial government in her southern home state of Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu is ruled by the DMK party, a prominent partner in Mr. Vajpayee's government.

When that crisis blew over, another ally of the nationalists put forward a ministerial post following charges of corruption.

That was followed by a series of by-elections. Defence Minister George Fernandes, a socialist leader, who accused China of constructing a helpup in a disputed area at the border and helping Pakistan to develop a surface-to-air missile.

Mr. Vajpayee denied the first allegation but Mr. Fernandes repeated anti-China comments have been an acute embarrassment for the government.

## More bodies pulled out as Italian mud hardens

SARNO, Italy (R) — More bodies were hauled out of the debris of southern Italy's mudslides Saturday as a row raged over who to blame for a disaster which killed scores of people and made more than 1,400 homeless.

Officials put the known death toll at 112, 91 of them in the town of Sarno, where one man was pulled out of rubble alive Friday after three days buried up to his neck.

The discovery of Roberto Robustelli, 22, raised hopes that more survivors might be found. But as emergency workers laid row upon row of coffins in a school gym in Sarno, those hopes grew ever dimmer.

Dry, sunny weather brought no relief to the ravaged towns, hardening the mud into solid blocks and forcing relief workers to attack it with pickaxes as well as shovels.

Excavation efforts were hampered because dumps where debris was being tipped had filled up, forcing lorries to drive ever further from the disaster site to empty the waste.

Prime Minister Romano Prodi, returning to Rome from a visit to the United States, was to chair a high-level meeting later on the tragedy, triggered when days of driving rain sent mud and topsoil gushing down mountainsides and coursing through the impoverished region of Campania.

Mr. Prodi's government, which has set aside 50 billion lire (\$30 million) to aid initial relief and reconstruction efforts, has borne the brunt of the accusations which invariably follow natural disasters in Italy.

Politicians, local officials and editorialists have accused the government of failing to stop illegal construction or take steps to reverse environmental imbalance in the poor south.

They say the government was so busy cutting costs to qualify for the European Union's single currency that it neglected the south, or Mezzogiorno.

The government has declared a state of emergency in three provinces and is to fly the flag at half-mast throughout the country Monday.

Officials of the province of Naples, near Campania, have called on the government to organise a national lottery to raise funds for the stricken areas, where hundreds of houses have been destroyed and entire families buried.

Italian media have dubbed the disaster the "Pompeii of the year 2000", a reference to the volcanic eruption that buried thousands of people in volcanic ash near Naples in 79 A.D.

The civil protection department said 1,435 people had been made homeless. It has stopped issuing estimates of missing amid confusion over the numbers.

Some 42 U.S. Marines from Naples Saturday joined 40 U.S. Navy servicemen already helping relief efforts in the town of Quindici. Lieutenant Jeff Gordon told Reuters from the scene.

A convoy of U.S. Navy vehicles carrying emergency equipment headed to Quindici Friday, where servicemen erected a camp to shelter Italian volunteers and set about carting away earth from the excavation area.

## 14 Indian tribespeople killed in renewed ethnic violence

GUWAHATI, India (AFP) — At least 14 tribespeople were hacked to death in their sleep and several houses burnt early Saturday in a renewed spate of ethnic violence in the far-eastern Indian state of Assam, police said.

A police official in Assam's troubled Kokrajhar district, 200 kilometres from the state capital Guwahati, said members of the Bodo tribe attacked two villages of the rival Santhal tribe before dawn.

"Most of the victims were hacked to death. The Bodos used machetes and other weapons," Kokrajhar police official A.H. Shaikh told AFP.

"They burnt down two villages. We do not know the exact number of houses that were razed or the number of injured."

Over the past week, some 20 people have been killed in Bodo-Santhals clashes for land rights in Kokrajhar.

In November 1996, a clash between Bodos and Santhals in Kokrajhar, which borders the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, left more than 500 people dead.

Thousands of people have died in Assam in lingering ethnic and separatist violence. Assam is the biggest of seven states in India's troubled far-east.

## Taleban, Masood exchange heavy fire north of Kabul

HOSSEIN KOT, Afghanistan (AFP) — Taleban forces and troops loyal to the ousted government traded heavy shells and mortars on frontlines here north of the militia-held capital Kabul Saturday, AFP witnessed.

Hardline Muslim militia commanders also asserted their readiness for a full-scale attack following two days of artillery, rocket and mortar fire but no change in positions only 25 kilometres north of the capital.

"There has been some shelling since yesterday (Friday) morning but there hasn't been any change in the frontline," Taleban frontline commander Haji Mullah Abdul Sattar explained at his rear-line command post.

Both the Taleban and opposition troops continued to trade heavy fire throughout the day, but there have been no reports of any infantry engagements or casualties.

He said although Taleban forces — who have been deadlocked here for over eight months — were ready to attack forces of ex-regime commander Ahmad Shah Masood, orders to attack had yet to come.

"We are hopeful to expand the fighting," Mr. Sattar enthused. "We have been ready to launch a big offensive for a long time but the leaders have been telling us to wait for the results of the talks."

Peace talks between the Taleban and the northern-based opposition alliance broke down a week ago leaving most observers — and commanders here — expectant of more fighting.

"The opposition are barbaric so how can we, the military people, want peace," Mr. Sattar said. "No one will accept any deal where the Koran and Shariat are not ruling."

The Taleban hold around two-thirds of Afghanistan including the capital Kabul which they seized in September 1996, and have imposed what they say is the world's purest Islamic state on areas under their control.

The anti-Taleban alliance includes a collection of former arch-enemies, which came together when the Taleban attempted to extend their control into northern Afghanistan.

It includes the ex-government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and topgun Mr. Masood, ex-Communist and ethnic-Uzbek warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum and the Shiite Muslim Hezb-i-Wahdat.

Sattar enthused. "We have been ready to launch a big offensive for a long time but the leaders have been telling us to wait for the results of the talks."

However, a staff member at the nearby Boromous hospital's emergency ward said "there are many (students) brought here," but declined to give a figure or any details on the injured.

Suryadi of the Bandung chapter of the Legal Aid Institute said he had been told several students were injured by rubber bullets but he had yet to confirm the report.

Suhada said authorities had shut the road in front of the university to traffic.

In Yogyakarta, central Java, rocks flew as over 1,000 students from two neighbouring universities clashed with police there, a staff of the Islamic Institute there said.

"It is still happening and the police have already taken over the university's security guard post in the front," said the member of staff, who identified himself as Heri.

The incident started when about 100 students from the Higher School of Agriculture attempted to take their protest out of their campus, Heri said.

Police who started beating up the students also assaulted many students

## Scuffles break out in student rallies in Indonesia

JAKARTA (AFP) — Scuffles broke out in student rallies across Indonesia Saturday as hundreds more protested calling for sweeping reforms amid the country's economic crisis.

Scuffles broke out in at least three towns on Java as students called for a complete overhaul of the country's political system and economic improvements.

Another demonstration in the eastern Indonesian city of Ujungpandang went off peacefully Saturday.

Some 500 students from the state Pajajaran university in Bandung, West Java, scuffled with police who blocked their way off the campus, the head of campus security, Suhada said.

"Tear gas and rubber-coated bullets were fired but there were only some light injuries when students were beaten or trampled over," Suhada said.

However, a staff member at the nearby Boromous hospital's emergency ward said "there are many (students) brought here," but declined to give a figure or any details on the injured.

Suryadi of the Bandung chapter of the Legal Aid Institute said he had been told several students were injured by rubber bullets but he had yet to confirm the report.

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The incident started when about 100 students from the Higher School of Agriculture attempted to take their protest out of their campus, Heri said.

Police who started beating up the students also assaulted many students

## Beijing outrage film on occupation

BEIJING (AFP) — China expressed outrage Saturday at a new Japanese film entitled "Pride," an instant in a series of movies dealing with the trial and last days of the wartime Japanese Emperor Hirohito.

"Hirohito Tojo was the chief instigator of the war of aggression. We feel shocked that some people in Japan produced such a movie to whitewash aggression and bring the praise of Hirohito," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said.

"It is known that aggression was Japan's main cause of suffering and mass of irreparable evil just verdict was the international long ago," he said.

Hirohito Tojo, minister of Defense, threw Japan into the United States



## Hindu nationalists, allies meet to resolve disputes

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's ruling Hindu nationalist party and its numerous coalition allies began talks here Saturday to resolve disputes threatening the multi-party alliance.

An official of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said the meeting was chaired by Premier Atal Behari Vajpayee at his official residence.

The month-old BJP-led coalition has been wracked by veiled threats of withdrawal of support, increasing demands from regional partners and corruption allegations which have led to the sacking of two cabinet ministers.

Saturday's meeting was the first gathering of the BJP and top leaders from its more than dozen allies since the government was formed in March. An official called it a "stock-taking."

The Hindustan Times newspaper predicted the meeting could see demands from regional allies for more cabinet seats ahead of an expected cabinet expansion.

Home Minister and outgoing BJP President Lal Krishna Advani, the number two in the cabinet, recently admitted that the government had endured a "period of much pain" in its first month.

He said, however, that the "trials and tribulations" had "steered our resolve to stabilise and to strengthen ourselves."

The Hindu nationalists emerged as the largest bloc in India's hung parliament after deadlocked February-March elections and had to win over around a dozen regional parties.

The BJP had campaigned on a pledge to end crippling political instability in India, which has had five governments and two elections since 1996.

The government faced its first crisis last month when a maverick politician from southern India, Jayalalitha Jayaram, demanded the resignation of several ministers after one of her protégés in the cabinet was forced to quit over corruption allegations.

She commands the support of 27 members of parliament within the 264-seat coalition and could have brought down the government by switching to the equally fragmented opposition.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was forced to sack his communications minister to placate Ms. Jayaram, who also wants the premier to dismiss the provincial government in her southern home state of Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu is ruled by the DMK party, a prominent partner in Mr. Vajpayee's government.

When that crisis blew over, another ally of the nationalists quit his provincial ministerial post following charges of corruption.

That was followed by sabre-rattling by Defence Minister George Fernandes, a socialist leader member of the ruling coalition, who accused China of constructing a help in a disputed area at the border and helping Pakistan to develop a surface-to-surface missile.

Mr. Vajpayee denied the first allegation but Mr. Fernandes' repeated anti-China comments have been an acute embarrassment for the government.



Olara Otunnu, U.N. Secretary-General's Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, makes a point at a Colombo news conference after receiving a pledge by Tamil rebels not to enlist child soldiers in their war against the Sri Lankan government (Reuters photo)

## U.N. moves to implement Tiger pledges on Sri Lanka war

COLOMBO (AFP) — The United Nations said Saturday it was working on a plan to ensure that Sri Lanka's warring parties kept their promises to spare children from the separatist conflict.

Olara Otunnu, a special representative of Secretary General Kofi Annan looking after the welfare of children in armed conflict, said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had promised immediately to stop recruiting child warriors and to halt attacks on civilians.

Leaders of the LTTE also promised to review their strategies and tactics of attacking civilian targets, Mr. Otunnu told reporters after visiting the embattled northern region during his week-long visit here.

Mr. Otunnu, a former Ugandan foreign minister, said both the LTTE and the government would be involved in monitoring a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the pledges he extracted from the two sides.

He said the LTTE had agreed to a monitoring mechanism after agreeing to five points he raised about the welfare of children and civilian communities and the free movement of people in the conflict zone.

The U.N. official said he was concerned about newspaper reports on the day he arrived last Sunday, that the government was about to launch a recruitment drive in schools for its army. However Mr. Otunnu said the authorities had since assured him that there was no such plan.

"If you start it in schools then it is a slippery slope," Mr. Otunnu said, cautioning the government against deviating from the policy of not recruiting anyone aged below 18.

During the U.N. official's visit to the northern Vanni region, the LTTE declared a unilateral truce. Mr. Otunnu said both sides had

agreed to observe "two days of tranquillity."

However the government denied it agreed to the truce and accused the LTTE of breaking its own unilateral ceasefire by killing three policemen within an hour of Mr. Otunnu's arrival in Vanni Wednesday.

The military as well as the government has treated LTTE pledges to Mr. Otunnu with scepticism.

Army chief Rohan Daluwatte said Friday he did not believe the LTTE would keep its promise and said most of its fighters were boys and girls below the age of 17.

"I don't believe that they will not take child soldiers," Mr. Daluwatte said. "It is just not possible for them not to recruit children. We have seen from the pictures of captured Tigers and those killed that they are kids."

Military officials also did not take seriously the LTTE offer not to target civilian installations.

Mr. Otunnu said he had expressed his "gravest concern" about the continuing targeting of civilians throughout the country during his talks with Tiger political leader Thamilselvan and top ideologue Anton Balasingham.

"The LTTE leadership acknowledged this to be an important and legitimate concern and undertook to review its strategies and tactics in this regard," the U.N. official said.

Security in the capital has been tightened amid fears of Tamil Tiger bomb attacks. There has been at least one bomb attack every month in and around the capital and key towns since the LTTE blasted the World Trade Centre in Colombo last October.

More than 55,000 people have been killed in fighting in the past 25 years and about a quarter of the victims are believed to be children.

# Kofi Annan calls for end of flow of arms to refugee camps

KAMPALA (AFP) — U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan Saturday said humanitarian agencies did not have the means to address and resolve refugee problems requiring political and military responses and appealed for an end to be put to the flow of arms to refugee camps.

Addressing the closing session of a two-day regional workshop here on refugee issues in the Great Lakes region, Mr. Annan said: "Humanitarian agencies should not be expected to address and resolve problems which require political and military responses such as the separation of refugees from military elements, militiamen and terrorists."

"Humanitarian assistance is ineffective if illegal flow of arms and the use of landmines in camps are not checked," Mr. Annan told the workshop, co-convened by Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Secretary-General Salim Ahmed

Salim and U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata.

Mr. Annan said that at times, humanitarian assistance became "an involuntary cause of insecurity, a tool of war."

"The international community did not provide adequate military resources to separate refugees from genocidal elements between 1994 and 1996," said Mr. Annan, who was in charge of U.N. peacekeeping operations at the time of the Rwandan genocide, during which between 500,000 and 800,000 people were slaughtered.

Mr. Annan said: "We made mistakes in Rwanda," an echo of his earlier speech in the Rwandan parliament Thursday when he admitted that the world had shirked its responsibilities over Rwanda.

"But we should not see anyone refugees being taken hostage by those whose interests are to insti-

gate violence and to create instability," Mr. Annan pledged.

Saying that the Great Lakes region was still grappling with the consequences of that biblical exodus, Mr. Annan pointed out: "There were still thousands of Burundians remaining in exile in the Kivu region of eastern Congo, and the unrest threatened to cause further displacement to innocent civilians."

Friday, Ms. Ogata told the workshop that her office had in the past four years been confronted in this region with the most difficult refugee problem ever, a reference to the mass exodus of refugees sparked by the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Ms. Ogata said thousands of Rwandans left the country, among them armed former soldiers and the dreaded Interahamwe militia, who soon regrouped, reorganised and launched attacks on their home coun-

try, while genuine refugees were held hostage and even killed when they expressed the desire to return home.

"There is a growing problem of how to separate refugees from fighters and how to maintain the civilian character of the refugee camps," Ms. Ogata said, adding that the problem lay not with the principles of refugee law, but in their application.

However, she welcomed Mr. Annan's call in Kigali to establish an "international mechanism" which will help countries of asylum to maintain the civilian character of refugee camps, but distanced herself from failure by the international community to step in during the Rwandan refugee crisis.

"The international community failed to provide the support that was needed — the support which I repeatedly requested through the U.N. secretary general and the Security Council," Ms. Ogata said.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, meanwhile, blamed colonialism as the major cause of refugee problems in Africa and called for its ideological defeat to end the scourge of refugees on the continent.

"To defeat the cause of these refugees, we must inflict ideological defeat. We can't allow these theories to linger and then manage the refugees created by them," Mr. Museveni told the workshop in his keynote opening address.

The objective of the workshop in Kampala, which is a follow-up on the visit of Ms. Ogata to the region last February, is to seek solutions to the forced displacements in the region, particularly how to reconcile the protection of refugees with the security of the host country and its neighbours. Mr. Annan was leaving Kampala Saturday afternoon for Asmara, last stage of his eight-nation African tour.

## Yeltsin's kidnapped Chechenya envoy is alive

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin's envoy to Chechenya, who was kidnapped on May 1, is still alive, Russian Interior Minister Sergei Stepashin was quoted as saying Saturday by Interfax news agency.

Valentin Vlasov was the first senior Russian official to be kidnapped in the break-away Russian republic since it won de facto independence from Moscow in a 21-month war, which ended in August 1996.

Mr. Stepashin said the authorities were expecting to receive the kidnappers' demands for Mr. Vlasov's release within the next four or five days. The envoy was said to be held in Chechenya.

The minister gave no further details.

His remarks were the first official word on Mr. Vlasov's fate since he was kidnapped by five armed men near the border between the separatist Russian republic of Chechenya and neighbouring Ingushetia.

No ransom demand has been received by the Chechen authorities, who have offered a \$100,000 reward for information leading to Mr. Vlasov's safe return. Moscow said it would not pay a ransom.

A massive security operation throughout the mountainous republic has so far failed to reveal the whereabouts of the presidential envoy.

On May 5, Russian President Boris Yeltsin warned there could be no forgiveness for the kidnappers.

Mr. Vlasov's driver and bodyguard, both Chechens, were arrested after the kidnapping on suspicion of complicity and negligence respectively.

Chechen figures last month showed that 65 people, including six foreigners, were being held hostage. The kidnappers normally demand heavy ransoms to release their hostages.

## Cook says he has nothing to hide in arms-to-Sierra Leone scandal

LONDON (AFP) — British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said Saturday he had "nothing to hide" in the arms-to-Sierra Leone scandal as a British firm of mercenaries said it helped mount a coup in the West African country with the support of senior officials in London.

The operation in February to restore elected President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, ousted in a military coup in May 1997, was initiated and approved by Britain, Sandline International, a British firm of military consultants, has alleged.

Such action was in defiance of a U.N. arms embargo. London papers said that if the mercenaries' claims are confirmed, Mr. Cook's apparent ignorance about the British government's role in the sanctions-busting arms exports would betray deep incompetence.

"What is being revealed in this sorry affair is an incompetence so gross that it comes close to a dereliction of duty," the mid-market Daily Mail wrote.

There are already two

inquiries into the affair, a criminal one under the Customs and Excise Department and an independent inquiry promised by Mr. Cook which will make its findings public.

In the face of repeated denials that there were any official contacts between the foreign office and the security firm, Sandline released a letter sent to Mr. Cook on April 24 detailing contacts with senior Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence officials. It even claimed a helicopter used in the coup which overthrew Johnny Paul Koroma was repaired onboard a British warship.

In the letter, it said that Britain's High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, had suggested that Mr. Kabbah approach Sandline to supply guns for the coup.

The U.S. State Department was also claimed to have given its support for the operation, in which 30 tonnes of guns and ammunition were flown from Bulgaria in February to local forces in Sierra Leone. This was later denied by Washington

but a State Department spokesman said Washington had urged London to take initiatives to provide logistic support for the Nigerian-led ECOMOG force which finally overthrew Mr. Koroma.

The arms-to-Sierra Leone affair already threatens to claim the scalp of Mr. Cook's number two, Tony Lloyd, who has admitted misleading parliament over when he became aware of the allegations of the illegal arms sales.

Mr. Cook said Saturday "I have nothing to hide and I am determined that there will be no hiding place for the facts." He also repeated that no ministers had any discussions or contact with Sandline.

But Sandline protested in its letter to Mr. Cook that it had been involved in the operation "quite openly and with the full prior knowledge and approval of her majesty's government."

The letter named four foreign office officials said to have been briefed by the company. The man who first raised the alarm over the affair, Liberal

Democrat Lord Avebury, said it seemed there was a "conspiracy by senior civil servants" to keep ministers ignorant of what was going on.

He maintained that both Mr. Lloyd and his ministerial colleague Baroness Symons were kept in the dark.

Former Conservative Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind asked: "Who's in charge of the Foreign Office. Is it the Foreign Office diplomats or is it the Foreign Secretary?" He added: "I do not find it easy to believe that... ministers themselves were not being kept informed of what was going on."

Labour MP Dianne Abbott wants Mr. Lloyd to appear again before MPs to say whether or not he finds it strange that in a government with a so-called ethical foreign policy, civil servants do not keep ministers informed on such issues.

Prime Minister Tony Blair has already said there will be disciplinary action against any official or minister found guilty of breaching U.N. resolutions.

## Pakistani Christians file past body of bishop in tense hometown

LAHORE, Pakistan (AFP) — A steady stream of Pakistani Christians Saturday paid last respects to Catholic Bishop John Joseph, who committed suicide in protest at the death sentence imposed on a fellow Christian under the country's blasphemy law.

Joseph's body lay in state at the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul in his hometown of Faisalabad in Punjab province, where he will be laid to rest Sunday.

Pakistan ordered an inquiry into the suicide. Joseph shot himself in the temple with a pistol in the town of Sahiwal outside a court which nine days earlier had condemned the Christian to death.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, in a message of condolences to the bishop's family, voiced his "deep grief."

Amid simmering anger in the Islamic republic's minority community, five Christians began a hunger strike in front of the provincial assembly in Punjab's capital Lahore.

The strikers, belonging to the Christian League, sat under posters demanding the repeal of the blasphemy law, which minorities say has been abused by Muslim

extremists to harass and victimise them.

Hundreds of Christian missionary schools remained closed in Punjab for a second day and special services were held in churches for the bishop.

Witnesses said a major security operation was in force in Faisalabad following clashes Friday in the city, the country's third most populous, between police and Christian demonstrators.

Armed police roamed the streets. Markets and private and government establishments were open but were much quieter than normal in the charged atmosphere, witnesses added.

Police said a militant Sunni Muslim group, Sipah-i-Sahaba, threatened demonstrations in Faisalabad over the tearing down of a board bearing a fundamental Islamic tenet, Kalima, during Friday's Christian procession with Joseph's coffin.

Some groups armed with sticks emerged onto the streets overnight but were chased away by security forces before they could attack Christian citizens or property, police sources said.

Christian organisations

have vowed to continue the struggle for which Joseph gave his life. He said in a message published by a newspaper after his death that "sacrifices" were needed to achieve the goal.

Leader of Pakistan's Christian National Party, Joseph Francis, said in Lahore it had become "impossible for Christians to live a secure and honourable life" in the face of "religious fanaticism" and abuse of laws.

The Pakistani prime minister said he regretted that Joseph, "instead of following the course of law decided to act otherwise."

Asserting that the constitution guarantees full freedom and rights to minorities, Mr. Sharif said he hoped the incident would not harm relations between Christians and Muslims.

Members of a Commission for Justice and Peace, which was founded by Joseph, criticised state-run television for blacking out news about the bishop.

The blasphemy law, under which 25-year-old Ayub Masih was convicted last month for allegedly uttering insulting remarks about the Prophet Muhammad, was enacted by then-military ruler

Muhammed Zia ul Haq in 1985.

So far no one has been executed and Masih can appeal to the High Court within 30 days.

In 1995 a lower court sentenced to death a 14-year-old Christian, Salamati Masih, and his uncle Rehmat Masih for blasphemy. A High Court later acquitted them but threats reportedly forced them to quietly leave the country.

Christians, four per cent of the 140 million population in Pakistan, and other minorities have demanded the blasphemy law be amended to provide safeguards against false complaints.

Then-Premier Benazir Bhutto tried to amend the law in 1995 following concerns from some Western countries. But she had to shelve the plan after religious groups launched strikes and demonstrations.

The Nation newspaper said in an editorial the suicide "is certain to send negative signals to an already sceptical West about Pakistan's legal system and the condition of the minorities."

The paper called for procedural amendments to the law to prevent its abuse.

## Beijing outraged at Japanese film on occupation of China

BEIJING (AFP) — China expressed outrage Saturday at a new Japanese film entitled "Pride, an instant in a Lifetime," which deals with the trial and last days of the often-reviled wartime General Hideki Tojo.

"Hideki Tojo was the chief criminal of the war of aggression. We feel shocked and indignant over the fact that some people in Japan produced such a movie to whitewash aggression and sing the praises of Hideki Tojo," Chinese foreign min-

istry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said.

"It is known to all that during World War II, the war of aggression waged by the Japanese militarists inflicted great suffering... the crimes committed are proved by a mass of iron-clad and irrefutable evidence and a just verdict was reached by the international community long ago," he added.

Hideki Tojo, named prime minister on Oct. 10, 1941, threw Japan into war with the United States on Dec. 7,

1941, with a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbour.

He was executed by hanging at age 64 in November 1948 after being condemned to death for war crimes, with six other Japanese leaders.

The court was similar to the Nuremberg trials organised by the allies to try Nazi war criminals.

Making such a film "is bound to be strongly condemned by people who face up to history and love peace," Mr. Zhu said.



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## Building on human gesture

THE RELEASE last week of Jordanian prisoners from Kuwaiti jails was a happy event and a source of fresh hope in an otherwise troubled region.

From a human perspective, the release ended the agony of families long divided and meant that the six prisoners who returned Thursday can finally enjoy normal lives as promising students and serious professionals.

From the point of view of international principles and jus cogens, it signals that governments are becoming increasingly aware that people cannot be jailed for their political opinions.

From a political point of view, the release of Jordanian prisoners from Kuwaiti jails reflects the two countries' determination to restore full diplomatic ties and resume their friendship in the spirit of Arab brotherhood.

At a time when Israel keeps denying the Palestinians their rights and puts the whole peace process in jeopardy, the Arab and Muslim countries of the Middle East should put aside their minor, and major, differences and stand united behind the cause of peace.

The prisoners' release follows on the heels of the historic release of around 5,000 Iraqis from Iranian jails and around 300 Iraqis from Iraqi jails in recent weeks.

It is unfortunate that Iraq and Iran would still be holding prisoners of war (PoWs) 10 years after the war between them ended. Combatants should not pay with their lives for wars that they did not initiate themselves. Governments should not use human beings to settle accounts or to strike bargains. Most PoWs are simply soldiers who come from all sorts of professions and who carry out somebody else's orders, men with families, wives and children waiting for them at home. Many of them did not join their armies out of conviction, but were forced to do so by economic needs, unemployment or conscription laws. Even if conflicts and differences between governments are not settled, it is shameful to punish individuals for something for which they are not responsible.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

**Al Ra'i's** Muness Razzaz discussed the outcome of the London meeting which he said demonstrated that Israel is the only country in the world that possesses the power to say "no" to the American empire. In the Arab World Lebanon is the only Arab country that is able to say "no" to Netanyahu while the other Arab states lack the will to acquire such power. He said it is a question of will power and resolve that can defeat the enemy's ambitions. It was only when Israel began to suffer from the blows dealt to its army by the Hizbollah resistance group of Lebanon that its leaders decided to withdraw from the occupied south, he said. The writer said that it was only when Sadat launched a war on Israel in 1973 inflicting heavy losses on the Israelis that the Israeli leaders accepted the idea of withdrawing from Sinai. Netanyahu is pushing Arafat gradually into the lap of Hamas and by so doing he is creating a climate for violence in the region, said the writer who added that the Arabs have the power to say "no" if they are really determined to regain their rights.

**Al Arab Al Yawm's** Riyadh Hroub criticised the government for lacking economic plans that would guarantee real development. In industry Jordan is still very weak and its production is very modest, in mineral resources only the Dead Sea and phosphate constitute the main sources of income, but these too are still modest and the country lacks major industries to ensure sufficient revenues, and in agriculture the country is still backward and the farmers still suffer from a million ills, according to the writer. He said in the 1970s the government announced and carried out socio-economic schemes and many of these schemes yielded good results and the public was satisfied to see industrial projects emerging, dams built and mines opened. But today it is regrettable to see the government borrowing in order to pay back dues or services on loans or only to finance small size projects that cannot cater to the real requirements of the Kingdom. He said it is not impossible to change the situation and it is not late to undertake very important decisions for the benefit of the country and its future generations.

## Sunday's Economic Pulse

# Inflation rate '97: It's how you calculate it

IS IT true the inflation rate in 1997 did not exceed three per cent? Why do we feel that the rate could have been as high as double the above figure?

There are several ways to measure inflation in a given year. Among these are the cost of living index, wholesale price index, and deflator of the national accounts. Each one of these indicators is meaningful in a certain situation but misleading in another.

The cost of living index for instance reflects change in the price of a basket of goods and services, which an average Jordanian family consumes, in an average month, while the deflator reflects the overall change of prices of the gross domestic product (GDP). Therefore cost of living index is the right tool to track the reduction of the purchasing power of the JD as far as families are concerned, while deflator is more indicative when we need to compare the volume of GDP in a given year with what it used to be in the preceding year, thus helping us arrive at the real annual growth rate in constant prices. There is a deflator for each category of GDP, such as agriculture, mining, construction, etc., and for GDP as a whole. Deflator covers everything as a weighted average. It includes items that may not be part of the consumer's basket of goods and services, such as the prices of potash, phosphate, fertilisers and civil servants' wages and salaries.

For social and political purposes, the cost of living index is superior, but even this particular indicator can be calculated in various ways yielding different results. If we take the average indices for the 12 months of 1997 and compare it with the average indices of the 12 months of 1996, we arrive at a three per cent inflation rate for 1997. This is the figure currently applied for all official usage. However, if we take the cost of living index in December 1997 and compare it with the cost of living index in December 1996 we arrive at 6.3 per cent as the inflation rate for 1997. I have hardly seen this last figure being used by any economist or analyst.

Which one of these two rates of inflation is more meaningful. In other words: Was inflation in 1997 as low as three per cent or as high as 6.3 per cent? Both figures are correct provided each is accompanied by a definition and explanation of the methodology employed in calculations. Both of the two results are taken from the officially published figures.

The annual average to annual average ratio, i.e., three per cent is correct if we are comparing individuals' income or GDP as a whole with what they were in the previous year, but the comparison of the price level at a given month with what it used to be in the same month of the previous year tells us what change took place during the past 12 months, irrespective of the situation over the duration of 24 months earlier.

Averages may be of value to economists and statisticians who deal with the aggregate figures of the economy, but as far as private citizens are concerned, they care about change from a year earlier. Thus it is right for the Jordanian people to conclude that the inflation rate in 1997 was 6.3 per cent not three per cent.

# Challenging the IMF, intellectually and politically

By Soren Ambrose

WASHINGTON — The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) growing involvement in crisis-ridden East Asia has earned it unprecedented and overdue attention. After decades of quietly designing and overseeing the economic policies of dozens of countries, the IMF has become a hot political issue on Capitol Hill.

Conservatives in Congress mistrust the IMF's willingness to meddle with market forces, bailing investors out of the consequences of their risky bets. Progressives oppose its reliance on trickle down economic policies that invariably favour the interests of multinational corporations and rich foreign investors over poor and middle-class people in poor countries.

Supporters of the IMF, including the leadership of both parties, appear uncomfortable with the growing public debate. They and the Clinton White House have worked hard all spring to avoid any committee hearings or roll call votes on IMF funding — even as President Bill Clinton continues to seek approval of an \$18 billion appropriation to bolster the international lending agency over the next three years — a 45 per cent increase in the U.S. commitment to the IMF.

Debate in the House is likely to centre on the IMF's intention to amend its Articles of Agreement to

mandate the deregulation of investment capital flows in member countries. Some say such deregulation set off the financial crises in Asia and Mexico.

The fund also faces an unprecedented intellectual challenge from its own ranks.

The most prominent and outspoken of the IMF's critics is the Harvard Professor Jeffrey Sachs, who advised the governments of Bolivia, Poland and Russia as they implemented IMF economic restructuring programmes in the 1970s and '80s. Mr. Sachs now opposes IMF policies to revive East Asian economies.

The recent crisis, he argues in the March-April issue of The American Prospect magazine, is "a financial panic made in the private sector" that the IMF at first ignored and then made worse.

He notes that in the months before the East Asian collapse, the IMF had expressed great confidence in the Asian economies, citing their "sound fundamentals" such as budget surpluses, high savings rates, low inflation and export-oriented industries.

Once the dependence of these countries on short-term foreign debt became apparent, panic set in. Asian currency values plunged and the IMF stepped in with its standard prescription: layoffs, higher interest rates and the opening of local economies to international investors.

As a result, Mr. Sachs notes, a "wave of bankruptcies is sweeping Korea, and a massive rise in unemployment seems set to hit all three of the economies" — Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea.

The IMF's own records bear out Mr. Sachs' criticism. Over the past 18 years, the IMF has required more than 80 countries in extreme debt distress to adopt its Structural Adjustment Programmes. To get access to IMF financing, governments must subscribe to the "Washington consensus," meaning they are effectively

required to cut government spending on health and education, devalue their currencies, raise interest rates and allow foreign ownership of domestic businesses.

If the enforced austerity of "structural adjustment" truly led to higher standards of living for the majority of the people in IMF client countries, the pain inflicted might be acceptable. But an internal study, completed by the IMF staff in September 1997, found that per capita income stagnated in countries undergoing structural adjustment from 1981 to

1995.

In developing countries free of the IMF, the study found that per capita income rose.

The technical language of these reports translates into shocking hardship for many. The classic case is Mexico, sometimes described as an IMF success.

In 1982, it became apparent that Mexico could not pay its foreign debts. The IMF put together a "rescue package" and, for the next decade, the Mexican government followed the IMF's standard policy prescriptions. But real income fell from 1982 to 1992. Infant deaths due to malnutrition tripled. The real minimum wage lost more than half its value, and the percentage of the population living in poverty increased from just under one-half to about two-thirds of Mexico's 87 million people.

In 1994, Mexico was again hit by financial crisis, as the risks of growth financed by short-term foreign investment became plain. The government was forced to devalue the peso, and foreign investors stampeded to withdraw their money. To reassure global financial markets, the IMF put together another bailout plan; since the plan's adoption, 20,000 small and medium-sized businesses — one-third of Mexico's commercial enterprises — have gone bankrupt and two million people have lost their jobs.

Perhaps the most surprising

new critic of the IMF is Joseph Stiglitz, the chief economist at the World Bank. The World Bank, which finances development projects such as dams and power plants in poor countries, is the IMF's sister institution.

In January, Mr. Stiglitz told The Wall Street Journal that the IMF bailout conditions in East Asia might cause a "severe recession" by imposing unnecessary austerity measures.

It is time to face up to the damage that has been wreaked by the IMF. The IMF's managing director, Michel Camdessus, recently acknowledged to a group of U.S. church leaders that realising the benefits of the IMF's macroeconomic model might require the "sacrifice of a generation." Congress should take the opportunity to abandon such cynicism and reject the additional \$18 billion for the IMF. Just as democratic governments long ago recognised that war was too important to be left to the generals, the economies of the world are far too important to be left to the economists at the IMF.

*The writer is on the steering committee of the 50 Years Is Enough Network, a coalition of more than 200 U.S. organisations dedicated to the fundamental transformation of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.*

— The Washington Post

## Asia needs social protections

RECENT EVENTS in Asia provide a dramatic illustration of how powerfully and swiftly a major economic shock can be translated into a major social crisis. They also provide a strong moral argument for ensuring greater stability in the international financial system. It was not only weaknesses in domestic policies and regulatory mechanisms that caused the crisis in Asia. The contagion of market processes by policies was also a root cause. The strengthening of democratic institutions is thus central to a post-crisis economic model. Free and fair elections, new dawn of expression and public debate, the rule of law and the accountability of elected officials are among the attributes of democracy, essential to

## U.S. Jewish leaders assuaged

To the editor:

AGAINST THE backdrop of no less than 81 U.S. senators 9out of 100) who signed a letter to President Bill Clinton warning him against pressuring the Israeli leadership, perhaps it was predictable that Secretary Madeleine Albright would run home from the London conference and immediately reassure the Jewish leaders in America that the administration would not "dictate" policy to Israel, and that "nothing will ever change the relationship of the United States with Israel." These two statements, it seems, would be sufficient to undo anything positive that might have been achieved at the London conference.

It has been obvious, since the inception of Benjamin Netanyahu's reign, that he has hoodwinked the American leadership, and has no fear of outright defiance of any suggestion that he should make some shifts in his policies. If there were any suspicion that America would for once come out with a courageous position and demand that Israel respect international law, this was quickly squelched by Ms. Albright in her subsequent statements. It is quite clear that America cannot "dictate" policy to Israel at this point, after spoiling her for decades with unquestioned support. The hypocrisy of this position is that it is American support for Israel, material and moral, that has allowed Israel to "dictate" her own policy of repression and exploitation in the region, regardless of world opinion.

Of course Mr. Netanyahu can go to Washington now and continue the charade of "negotiations, peace talks, blah, blah, blah, knowing the whole time that he doesn't have to give up anything. In fact, he could probably get away with a total withdrawal from the peace process, and meet with only upraised eyebrows from the American leadership.

As for the statement "nothing will ever change the relationship between America and Israel," we heard Vice President Al Gore parrot this same statement last week in Israel, as has every U.S. leader since Harry Truman. This is politics and vote grabbing in its most reprehensible form, and only stokes the convictions of people like Mr. Netanyahu, making real peace with justice a more remote possibility.

Bob Robertson  
 Amman

## LETTERS

### Staying in touch

To the editor:

I FEEL compelled to congratulate you on the wonderful service which you are providing on the Internet. This is an excellent way for Jordanians living outside the Kingdom to keep abreast of the latest issues affecting daily life in Jordan.

In particular, I found the new layout and design of your web pages to be an example of user friendliness at its best! Keep up the good work.

Ammar Habjouqa  
 Vienna  
 AUSTRIA

### A regular e-reader

To the editor:

I READ Ms. Alia A. Toukan's article "Syrian-Israeli talks would have led to Golan withdrawal — Savir" (Jordan Times, May 6) with great interest.

It has always been my contention that Syria could have recovered the entire Golan Heights in return for a total peace treaty and complete normalisation of relations with Israel. But because Syria was unwilling to even consider a comprehensive peace accord, the deal fell through. Total responsibility for this failure must be attributed to Syria.

This was not the first time that Israel offered Syria a total withdrawal.

Immediately after the 1967 war Israel agreed to relinquish the entire Golan as well as the Gaza Strip and the West Bank for a comprehensive pact similar to the present Jordanian-Israeli agreement. Syria rejected it then as well as in 1995.

Avraham Nahoumi  
 USA

## Two 'problems'

To the editor:

AS A VOLUNTEER working in Jordan over the past 11 months, I find your excellent newspaper to be essential daily reading for its coverage of both national affairs and the ramifications of the Arab/Israeli tensions. However, I must take issue with statements in your last two issues.

In a report on the Wadi Mousa wastewater plant you refer to "26 existing hotels with 2,700 beds in the area, and it is predicted that by the year 2010 there will be approximately 40 hotels with 4,000 beds." Personal observation and questioning of a local hotel owner and a tour guide have both indicated that there are already some 64 hotels.

Secondly, I find an item in your "Society on the Move" (May 7-8) to be defamatory in describing most of Amman's taxi drivers as "inconsiderate thugs." As an inevitably frequent user of taxis (and buses), nothing could be further from my experience. Apart from the occasional altercation at Abdali and Aqaba Ferry Terminal late at night over fare levels, I am pleased to say that, like your reporter, I have found them to be most helpful and certainly not "thugs."

Like your reporter, I have also experienced invaluable assistance from one driver when I returned to my apartment late one evening to find that my bank and credit cards were not in my wallet. I was just about to telephone my card agency in the U.K. to report the loss and stop all transactions when there was a ring on my door bell and I found my apartment porter with the taxi driver. He had taken the trouble to track me down to return the cards which he had found in his taxi after they had fallen from my wallet when I came to pay the fare.

No Sir. Like nearly all the Jordanian people that I have had the privilege to meet during my stay here, bus and taxi drivers are courteous, kind and generous — as well as being eager to practise their English on a foreign visitor!

Brian Cope  
 Amman

*The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.*

Following a statement by European Commission President Romano Prodi released on the occasion of Europe Day, May 9.

MANY YEARS ago people used to refer to the so-called "bicycle theory" of European integration. The principle of the theory was that integration depended on momentum: as the momentum increased, the bicycle became more stable. Stop the momentum and the bicycle falls over. The theory was that if you need momentum to keep the bicycle stable, you need to keep the momentum going. And then you fall off. Life does not always go according to the best theories, however. One does not necessarily fall off a stopped bicycle. Nothing prevents you from pushing one back down for balance, drawing it back and riding off again with more energy and perhaps a little more certainty about the direction of the ride.

So it is with European integration. At the beginning of the present commission, our view was that we should concentrate on ensuring that what we had done more effectively. Basically, we have been endeavouring to ensure that we have digested the implications of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (EU) and to ensure that the 1992 Intergovernmental Conference took account of the commission's new potential improvements to existing policies and procedures. The point was to prepare the EU for the new challenges of the international system.

And indeed, there have been far-reaching changes in the world since 1992 and we have not yet seen the end of them. The confrontation between the Soviet bloc and the free world has come to an end, leaving behind a radically changed international scene, where international actors are still trying to find their place.

Some have argued that we have seen the end of history and the triumph of the market economy and liberal democracy.

Others argue that we are heading for a conflict of civilisations closely resembling a war of religions. All these ideas are interesting. But let us look at things from a more practical angle. I want to mention two challenges to the EU in this celebration of Europe Day 1998.

The first challenge is to fulfil the role we are expected to play on the world stage. The second is the enormous challenge of making a success of the EURO, the single European currency which is now formally in existence.

I start from two assumptions. First, the union's action on the international scene and its success in establishing the new EURO as a major international currency is a test of European identity. It is one of the essential factors which will allow Europeans to identify with the common venture in which their countries are involved.

Today not only the peoples of the union clearly believe that we do not carry the political weight we could and should carry, but many of Europe's international partners feel the same. In one extreme version, this translates as the union being branded a political dwarf, despite the fact of its giant status as an economic force in the world.

My second assumption is that there is a crying need for a strong union on the international scene. The EU cannot be an island of stability in a sea of poverty and crises. This would neither be comparable with Europe's values nor consistent with Europe's interests and, importantly, with the interests of our partners. In the Middle East, in Asia, in Eastern Europe, in the Balkans, we need a confident union working with other partners.

The EU does matter. But it can and must do more. This means making better use of the instruments it has developed over the years.

The transformation of the post-cold war international scene is marked by a shift in the weight of the conventional foreign policy instruments. There is a new degree of internationalisation in the area in which the state was so far the sole actor within its borders.

This transformation of international relations opens up entirely new prospects for the EU, new opportunities to influence world events, to assert and promote its values and achieve progress in human rights, to prevent conflicts of all kinds, to develop a balanced globalisation which will benefit all; to promote the inclusion of developing countries in world trade. This transformation is, at the same time, a challenge to Europeans to



# EU can and must do more on international scene, says chief envoy

I started out by saying that the integration process was like a bicycle ride and that we need momentum to keep the process alive. My main point on this Schuman day is that the momentum is there; constructing a European foreign policy and moving towards the full introduction of the EURO is closing the gap between the expectations of our citizens and of our international partners and our apparent capability. As always, I wish for Europe to have the means of its ambitions — the momentum to keep on target for the next century.

But it has to be admitted that our

2. We must prepare our decisions more carefully.

We should not lament the absence of

I started out by saying that the integration process was like a bicycle ride and that we need momentum to keep the process alive. My main point on this Schuman day is that the momentum is there; constructing a European foreign policy and moving towards the full introduction of the EURO is closing the gap between the expectations of our citizens and of our international partners and our apparent capability. As always, I wish for Europe to have the means of its ambitions — the momentum to keep on target for the next century.



# Palestinians show great interest in Jordanian products on display in Gaza

GAZA CITY (Petra) — Products by 40 Jordanian firms Saturday went on display at the first Jordanian trade fair which was opened under the patronage of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

The opening ceremony was attended by representatives of Jordanian business and industrial organisations as well as the board chairman of the Jordan Trade Association (JTA), Bassam Saket, Jordan's representative at the Palestine National Authority (PNA), Ziyad Majali, and other officials.

The Jordanian products on display include cosmetics, scent, chemical and metal manufactured goods, detergents, food stuffs and electric appliances.

Abu Ali Shahin, the PNA minister of supply, indicated that the Palestinians yearn for increased economic and trade relations with Arab states to help offset the present domination of Israeli goods in Palestinian markets.

The Palestinian markets prefer to strengthen their links with those of the Arab World but the Israelis are standing in the way and placing obstacles in the path of free trade exchanges and smooth export/import operations, Mr. Shahin said.

Praising the high quality of the Jordanian products, Mr. Shahin demanded that Jordanian trade fairs continue and stressed that the Palestinians would like to see an economic peace between Palestine and the Arab World rather than with the Jewish state.

Palestine Monetary Fund (PMF) Governor Foad Bseiso praised the high quality of the Jordanian products and described them as a source of pride for the Arab Nation stress-

ing that Jordanian goods can compete with similar products from advanced countries.

He expressed hope to see Jordanian products finding their way to Palestinian markets and replacing the Israeli ones. "Jordanian goods are closer to the Palestinian people's taste than others," he emphasised.

Expressing optimism that the peace process will take its course despite the obstacles laid by Israel, Dr. Bseiso called for an amendment to the Palestinian-Israeli economic agreements which he described as obstructing Palestinian development.

Dr. Bseiso said the PMF had signed agreements with the Central Bank of Jordan on regulating the banking procedures between the two sides.

He added that currently eight Jordanian banks have branches in the West

## Jordan gold market loses JD145m in 6 months

By Ahmad Kreishan  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan gold market suffered a JD145 million loss within six months following after the fluctuation and drop in gold prices.

Ghaleb Sakijha, secretary of the Jewellers Association, said: "We in the Kingdom have 70 tonnes of gold worth JD 600 million. At current prices, the gold is worth about JD455 million."

Mr. Sakijha added that gold prices dropped at the end of last year and the beginning of 1998 affecting the demand for gold and causing a stagnation in the Jordanian gold market.

Mr. Sakijha noted that due to the excessive supply in world markets, the prices of gold was declined internationally.

## Haddadin discusses scopes of cooperation with Bulgarian team

AMMAN (Petra) — Former Bulgarian Prime Minister Reneta Injova Sunday held talks with Munther Haddadin, minister of water and irrigation and acting minister of trade, industry and supply, on scopes of cooperation in economic and trade fields.

Ms. Injova reviewed with Dr. Haddadin aspects of promoting joint investments, exchange of goods, and encouraging technical and technological cadres to visit Bulgaria which is moving towards market economy.

The minister voiced Jordan's readiness to increase its exports to Bulgaria, particularly of phosphates, potash and agricultural products.

The visiting 20-member Bulgarian delegation expressed their satisfaction for the great developments being achieved under the leadership of his Majesty King Hussein.

Dr. Haddadin said the

delegation also asked for a copy of the Jordanian economic legislations in order to examine and to make use of them in the Bulgarian economic system.

He added that they voiced their readiness to establish an economic Bulgarian centre in Amman whose main objectives will be to provide investors and economists with information about economic conditions in Bulgaria.

On the other hand, Arab Bulgarian Chambers of Trade and Industry President Jihad Salem said that Jordan will also establish an information centre in Bulgaria whose job will be to spread information about the region and to enhance trade exchange.

"We have agreed with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply to launch joint exhibitions and arranged a schedule for Jordanian investors to visit Bulgaria," said Mr. Salem.

## Indonesia faces 'severe, prolonged' downturn — OECD

PARIS (AFP) — Indonesia faces a "severe and prolonged" economic downturn if it does not take timely action to reform its economy, while other South East Asian countries will not start to recover before next year at the earliest, the OECD has said.

The financial crisis in Asia appears to have stabilised in March, "at least for now," but "overall prospects have worsened since the latter months of 1997," the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said in its twice-yearly Economic Outlook report.

Asian economies' recovery is also threatened by the prospect of a protectionist backlash from their trading partners to keep out cheaper Asian exports as a result of the depreciation

of Asian currencies, the report said.

Asian countries directly affected by the crisis are suffering "severe contractionary pressures," while other Asian countries are suffering a spillover effect due to falling trade and a general worsening of investor sentiment towards the region.

"In most of these countries, recovery may not begin before next year, and it could take longer in the most severe cases," the OECD said.

South Korea, the only country directly involved in the financial crisis to be an OECD member, will see its economy shrink by 0.2 per cent this year, but return to growth of 4.0 per cent in 1999.

In Indonesia "the downturn is likely to be especially severe and prolonged without timely actions being taken by the authorities," the OECD said.

It forecast that the Indonesian economy will shrink 8.5 per cent this year, and grow just 2.0 per cent in 1999, after growing 4.7 per cent in 1997. Thailand will fare better because it responded to the crisis with "prompt and vigorous policy actions," but gross domestic product (GDP) will shrink 1.5 per cent this year after contracting 0.4 per cent in 1997, before returning to growth of 4.5 per cent in 1999, the report said.

"The prospects for a sustained recovery depend upon the authorities' ability to maintain the viability of the banking sector and to restrain growth in public spending," it added.

China "faces a difficult task in sustaining real growth this year," and will need to give a significant boost to consumer spending and capital investment, the report said.

"This task has become more difficult due to the marked decline in foreign direct inflows, much of which come from other Asian countries," it added.

From next year onwards,

prospects for growth in China "depend critically and increasingly on the government's success in reforming the state-owned enterprise sector and repairing the badly weakened financial position of banks."

OECD chief economist Ignazio Visco nonetheless welcomed the fact that the Beijing government is considering changes in the "real economy" to address its problems, rather than "short-term changes" through devaluing the yuan.

Hong Kong should be in a position to stage "a moderate recovery" in 1999, but "there are serious downside risks, particularly if China were to devalue its currency or if bad loans to the property sector or to other Asian crisis countries turned out to be greater than now expected."

Malaysia also faces "serious risks," the report said, although its economy will continue to grow, with GDP rising 1.4 per cent this year and 3.5 per cent in 1999, although this is far slower than last year's growth of 7.8 per cent.

"The fall in external demand from other Asian countries along with accumulating financial strains

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, MAY 10, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Because you so often volunteer, people sometimes think you can do everything. But if you do, how will the others ever learn to take care of themselves? It's really to their benefit for you to back off a bit. Make that your excuse for taking it easy tonight.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) You and an older relative may not agree on anything except that you disagree. Neither of you wants to be dominated, so you're playing games to prevent that from happening. If you do it on purpose, it could almost be fun. If you're doing it covertly, it'll be painful. The choice is yours.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Lend a hand again this morning. A friend who's under stress could use one. You can help not only emotionally, but physically. The work is not in your area of expertise, but don't let that stop you. Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 21) Which item should you buy, the special one or the one you can afford? You're in love with both, of course. You do seem to be getting more successful in your career, so more money should be coming soon. But as you well know, it's best to have it in your account before you spend it. Proceed with caution.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Plan to take it slow and easy. That'll be happening whether you plan for it or not. If it's a really beautiful day, you may decide just to go for a long walk with your sweetheart. The two of you will be able to agree on that, if nothing else.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Your significant other wants something you can't really afford, but you can figure out how to make it happen. If you don't have a significant other, the same scenario could apply to something you want for yourself. Study the situation carefully before making your request.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Pay back money you borrowed from a partner. This person probably hasn't asked for it, but even offering to pay will make a really good impression. It'll be hard to make contact with a loved one this afternoon. Schedule your date for the evening instead.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) You're in the mood for love — the slightly dangerous kind. That would be with someone you find both exciting and frustrating. Forget about who won or lost the last time you played this game and see if this person wants to go another round. You'll both have a great time.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) The better you can handle a big job, the better you feel about yourself. By doing something you said you'd do, you're reaping rewards you couldn't have anticipated and making a good impression on someone you love. Have a great time while you're at it.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) One person wants you to do this, another wants you to do that. You're just too popular. You can solve this problem by having everyone over to your house. This could be kind of costly, but nowhere near as expensive as what they had in mind. Fire up the barbecue!

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) An older person and a younger one are vying for your attention. Give it to the older one first. He or she has valuable advice for you, as well as emotional support. You hate to admit you need it, but it's nice to get some comforting, especially if you're not getting something else you want.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) There could be money coming in today. If you have anything to sell, race over to the swap meet. Or perhaps you have an old car you'd like to get rid of. Opportunities like this don't come everyday, so you'd better jump on it like a big dog.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

## Jordan National Bank profit by 39 per cent

ONE YEAR after the merger between the Jordan National Bank and the Business Bank, the merged entity, which retained the name Jordan National Bank, posted a profit of JD20.6 million during the first quarter of 1999, compared to JD12.9 million in the same period of the previous year.

The bank's net profit stood at JD10.3 million after deducting taxes and various provisions, the bank's net profit before the merger of the net profit, JD14.4 million was allocated to the statutory reserve and JD0.7 million to the voluntary reserve.

The profit and loss statement and the balance sheet were approved by the general assembly which also endorsed the recommendation of the board of directors to distribute dividends at a rate of seven per cent. The distribution is equivalent to a 15.75 per cent to JNB shareholders before taxes.

## REUTERS

## The Bank

Major Currencies & Cross Rates				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7996	0.6936	1.0600
DE Mark	0.5588	1.0000	0.5338	0.8000
GB Sterling	1.6384	2.9434	1.0000	1.5460
CHF Franc	0.8754	1.2137	0.4199	0.7030
JP Yen	0.0075	1.3614	0.0069	1.0000
CA Dollar	0.6071	1.2916	0.4326	0.8000
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0138	0.3443	0.3333
NL Guilder	0.4808	0.3363	0.3696	0.3333
FR Franc	0.1661	0.2363	0.1613	0.3333

Middle Eastern				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7996	0.6936	1.0600
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	2.5000	0.9372	1.5460
Saudi Riyal	0.2667	0.4800	0.1700	0.2800
Bahrain Dinar	2.68	4.7619	1.7073	2.8000
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.4900	0.1750	0.2800
Kuwait Dinar	3.2787	5.8571	2.1290	3.5000
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.4850	0.1720	0.2800
Lebanese/1000	0.68	1.2137	0.4199	0.7030
Egyptian	0.2527	0.4500	0.1600	0.2600

Energy		
Oil	Last	Review
Brent	13.79	13.73
WTI	15.17	15.22
Dubai	13.79	13.73
Dubai	12.93	12.73
Oil Gas	156.00	156.00

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	299.5	299.5
Silver (oz's)	5.96	5.99
Palladium (oz's)	396	396
AL (3 Months)	1397	1400
CU (3 Months)	1784	1788
Lead (3 Months)	1111	1113
Lead (3 Months)	554	558
Ni (3 Months)	5400	5420

Commodity		
Commodity	Last	Review
Coffee (c/lbs)	132.50	Spot
Cocoa (5/ton)	1996	Spot
Sugar (5/ton)	265.2	Spot
Wheat (5/ton)	94.5	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	29.56	Spot
Tea (5/ton)	115	Spot
Barley (5/ton)	0	Spot
Rice (5/ton)	410	Spot

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**THE Daily Crossword** Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- 1 Bath waters
- 5 Pond scum
- 10 College clique, briefly
- 14 Categorize
- 15 Spherical
- 16 Costa
- 17 Von
- 18 Skirt shape
- 19 to that
- 20 One of nine teammates
- 23 Colan Heights claimant
- 24 Glorifying
- 28 Slaughter in Cooperstown
- 31 Plastics base
- 32 Bussing grades
- 35 One of eleven teammates
- 39 Building add-on
- 40 now and again
- 41 Long, long time
- 42 One of six teammates
- 45 Sea eagles
- 46 Old-womanish
- 47 Hammer's head
- 49 Competed in a marathon, e.g.
- 53 Courtyards
- 57 One of five teammates
- 60 Drags
- 63 Ed who played Lou Grant
- 64 Notion
- 65 Surved molder
- 66 Lift
- 67 Carried a tune
- 68 Storage structure
- 69 Costume
- 70 Poplar or plane

DOWN

- 1 Open positions
- 2 Precisely meaningful
- 3 Out of bed
- 4 Sycraper sections
- 5 Part of U.A.E.
- 6 "Whate'er"
- 7 Semblance
- 8 Add territory
- 9 Botanical swelling
- 10 Heister-skeller rise
- 11 Edge
- 12 Slove card
- 13 Brown shade
- 21 Actor Duryea
- 22 Thomas Edison
- 25 Signer: slang
- 26 Synthetic thermoplastic material
- 27 Valleys
- 29 Cheers for toreadors
- 30 Goller
- 31 Salesmen
- 32 Aromatic wood
- 33 Sakharov's
- 34 Bonner
- 35 Opp. of mase.
- 37 Fairway hazard
- 38 Newcastle's river
- 43 Stopped by
- 44 Pianist Peter
- 45 Wind together
- 48 Acoustic organ
- 50 Symbol of achievement
- 51 Chavez or Romero
- 52 US Open winner Es
- 54 "M\*A\*S\*H" clerk
- 55 Care or Ryan
- 56 Pithy saying
- 58 Actor Parker
- 59 Hermite and galena, e.g.
- 60 Abasco, NM
- 61 Inarticulate grunt
- 62 Goli

**Peanuts**

WHY DO DOGS EAT SO FAST?

WE HAVE TO EAT FAST BEFORE THE HYENAS COME TO TRY TO TAKE AWAY THE KILL.

INCIDENTALLY, IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT HYENAS, THERE AREN'T ANY AROUND HERE.

DID YOU LOOK IN THE TREES?

**Andy Capp**

I'M TAKING TOMORROW OFF. OLD CHALKIE LIKES ME TO ACT AS LABORER WHEN HE DOES ANY JOB AROUND THE HOUSE.

ANDY'S JUST THE OPPOSITE, RUBE.

HE LIKES ME TO BE WELL AWAY WHEN HE DOES ANY JOB, IN CASE I COME OUT WITH THAT DREADED PHRASE "WHILE YOU'RE AT IT."

TRUST HIM.

**Mutt'n'Jeff**

WE'RE THE BEST TEAM IN THE BUSINESS. WE HAVE A SYSTEM.

DEEP SHOUTS THE ORDERS TO ME IN THE KITCHEN. SO EVERYBODY CAN HEAR IT!

IF A CUSTOMER ORDERS HOT SOUP I SHOUT "WE SERVE THE HOTTEST SOUP IN TOWN!"

IF A CUSTOMER ORDERS HOT SOUP I SHOUT "WE SERVE THE HOTTEST SOUP IN TOWN!"

I'LL HAVE A SMALL STEAK AND A CHEESE SANDWICH!

WE SERVE THE SMALLEST STEAK AND THE CHEESEST SANDWICH IN TOWN!

**THE BETTER HALF.** By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"My parents were very sentimental. They tried to have my first boyfriend bronzed."

**JUMBLE** THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Hans Arnold and Mike Angerer

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KALOC

TUBIC

TOATER

HANCUL

Answer: "CLOUT, BUTIC, TROAT, LUNCH"

Yesterday's Jumble: PROVE EMERY SPORRY GELERY

Answer: Any way you look at it, a sty is this — AN EYE "SORE"

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## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Jordan National Bank boosts net profit by 39 per cent in 1997

AMMAN — ONE YEAR after the merger between the Jordan National Bank (JNB) and the Business Bank, the new entity, which retained the name of Jordan National Bank, posted a JD32.9 million in gross earnings compared to JD20.6 million during the year preceding the merger. Interest and commission accounted for 88 per cent of the earnings with the remaining 12 per cent coming from foreign exchange, profits generated by the securities portfolio and other income.

The gross profit recorded by JNB at the end of last year amounted to JD10.3 million compared to JD8.6 million before the merger. After deducting taxes and various provisions, the bank's net profit stood at JD5.3 million (JD3.8 million before the merger) of the net profit, JD1.4 million was allocated to the voluntary reserve and JD0.7 million to the statutory reserve.

The profit and loss statement and the balance sheet were approved by the general assembly which also endorsed the recommendation of the board of directors to distribute dividends at a rate of seven per cent. The distribution is equivalent to a 15.75 per cent to JNB shareholders before the merger and to seven per cent for the shareholders of the Business Bank.

The annual report showed the total of the balance sheet at JD756.93 million. By including off-balance accounts, the total became JD913.25 million. At the end of Nov. 30, 1996 the figures were JD443.5 million and JD525.5 million respectively. Shareholders' equity increased to around JD70 million, net credit facilities extended totalled JD361.4 million and deposits of clients rose to JD600.9 million.

Board chairman Rajae Muasher told the general assembly that the bank's capital adequacy ratio was 17.72 at the end of last year. This ratio far exceeds the Basle Committee requirement of eight per cent and the 12 per cent ratio specified by the Central Bank of Jordan.

Dr. Muasher concluded by noting that the bank is currently working on expanding its network in Lebanon, the Palestinian territories and Yemen (Al Ra'i + Ad Dustour + Al Aswaq + Al Arab Yawm).

## Royal Jordanian to replace TriStar aircraft with Airbus on operational lease basis

By Ghaila Alul  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Debt-burdened Royal Jordanian (RJ) will sell its five ageing TriStar aircraft and replace them with a new generation of European A-310 and A-320 Airbus as part of efforts to modernise its fleet and boost its global network.

The whole process of selling the TriStars and leasing the Airbus will be completed in a year, Nader Dahabi, the airline's president and chief executive officer, told a news conference.

The sale of the five aircraft to the American TransAir Incorporation will help increase RJ's operational profits which stood at \$11.9 million in 1997 — a healthy increase over 1996 figures of \$3.6 million, he added.

"The sale of the five TriStars operating on the Far East and North America routes will be carried out in several stages. Three aircraft will be sold in June, July and December of 1998, and the remaining two in January and April 1999," said Mr.

Dahabi. He said the sale of the five TriStars will save the company between \$27 to \$30 million annually in differences between the per hour flying costs of the two types of aircraft.

He did not mention any figures for the sale of the five and the expected cost of lease on an operational basis for the four new aircraft, saying that RJ had not yet signed a sale contract with the American company.

"But given the continued political tension in the region and the Asian economic crisis, we got a good price in comparison with the current international prices for such aircraft," said Mr. Dahabi.

In 1996, RJ paid the final instalment on the \$60 million TriStar aircraft leased for the past 10 years from Banque Indosuez. The five TriStars were the only aircraft owned by RJ which has a fleet of 17 aircraft.

"This time, RJ does not intend to purchase the new Airbus at the end of the lease period to avoid their worn out," said Mr. Dahabi.

"This lease is called

operational lease, whereby the Airbus will go back to the owner by the end of the lease period. Unlike the capital lease when RJ had to purchase the five TriStar aircraft after the lease period was over," according to Mr. Dahabi.

After the sale is concluded, about 20 to 30 flight engineers who operate the TriStars will be transferred to the airline's training centres and maintenance department or to other Arab airline companies in need of their skills, said Mr. Dahabi.

He added that the sale of the five aircraft will be consistent with RJ's plans to restructure and privatise its operations by turning the national carrier into a company that operates on a commercial basis.

Mr. Dahabi said a subsidiary company will eventually be established to take responsibility of all airline's core functions. A shareholding company will be responsible for all non-core business units such as duty free, catering and training.

"The sale of the TriStars will encourage the strategic partner to join the oper-

ating subsidiary company that will have a lesser number and types of aircraft," said Mr. Dahabi.

He said legal and financial advisors will be selected next month to implement a World Bank blueprint for a five-stage privatisation programme, expected to be completed by 1999.

Five global investment banks have submitted bids to act as financial advisors to help the government privatise the state carrier. RJ bankers said Thursday.

They said Citibank, Chase Manhattan, Paribas, Credit Lyonnais and Merrill Lynch responded to RJ's invitation last March to 12 global banks to submit expressions of interest by May 4 to act as financial advisors.

Company officials said they also received responses from eight international legal firms among 14 approached at the same time to act in parallel with the financial advisor as legal consultants to the government.

The financial and legal restructuring of the airline will help put it on a more profitable and a sounder

administrative level before it can operate on commercial basis.

RJ operations are currently heavily subsidised by the government.

"Privatisation of RJ does not mean that the airline plans to layoff some of its employees," said Mr. Dahabi. "We, however, try not employing new staff."

Plans to privatise the airline, saddled with debts of over \$846 million, were first floated in 1988 but held back due to a host of bureaucratic and financial reasons.

With reference to RJ's plans to strengthen its regional network, Mr. Dahabi said the national air carrier will increase to three its weekly flights to Kuwait and as of mid-June, will resume direct flights to Tehran after an 18-year suspension in order to encourage religious tourism.

## Government to award major power project in October

By Mohammad Ben Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government is expected to award a \$500 million project to build, own and operate (BOO) a power generation plant in northern Jordan by end of the year, an official said Saturday.

Ahmad Bashir, Secretary General at the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, said the project's terms of reference (TOR) will be completed later this month after the ministry qualified 11 international companies.

The 300-450 megawatt project, the first such to be run by the private sector after parliament endorsed a law ending state monopoly on electricity generation in 1996, will help cover an expected seven per cent rise in annual demand on electricity consumption between the year 2002 and 2005.

Work on the project will begin in late 1999.

"We expect to choose the winning company that will execute the project by late October," added Mr. Bashir.

The ministry will also select a consultant to assess the offers and negotiate with the winning company.

The project will be commissioned in 2001.

Mr. Bashir listed the 11 qualified companies as — ABB Energy Ventures B.V. (Netherlands) with SNAM (Italy) and Amoco (USA) — AES Corporation (USA) — Ansaldo Energia (Italy) with ENEL (Italy) — Bechtel Enterprises International Ltd. (U.K.) — CEA International (France) — Enron (USA) with Mitsubishi (Japan) — El Paso Energy (USA) with Black & Veatch (USA) — National Power PLC (U.K.) — South Energy Incorporated (USA) and Tractebel (Belgium).

## Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates					Prices as at 9/05/98 19:45				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	MLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7960	0.6104	1.4805	132.85	1.4346	1771.33	2.0045	6.0205
DE Mark	0.5588	-	0.3395	0.8242	73.96	0.7983	985.99	1.1160	3.3617
GB Sterling	1.6384	2.9434	-	2.4257	217.71	2.3503	2902.15	3.2842	9.8640
CH Franc	0.6754	121.27	0.4119	-	89.71	0.9694	1195.04	135.35	4.0652
JP Yen	0.0075	1.3514	0.4590	1.1140	-	1.0792	13.33	150.83	4.5301
CA Dollar	0.6971	1.2916	0.4225	1.0568	1.08	-	1270.80	1.4561	4.3266
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0138	0.3442	0.0636	1338.11	0.8094	-	11.31	3.3977
NL Guilder	0.4989	88.58	0.3042	73.35	86.23	0.7153	883.46	-	3.0027
FR Franc	0.1661	0.2983	0.1013	24.5889	22.04	0.2382	33.29	33.2900	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7501	0.3770	3.6409	0.3060	3.6728	1513.40	3.4160
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	6.2883	0.5317	5.1383	0.4302	5.1803	2134.56	4.8181
Saudi Riyal	0.2667	0.1891	-	0.1006	0.97	0.0813	0.98	403.58	0.9109
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8906	9.8472	-	0.95	0.8090	9.74	405.42	9.0610
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	1.0300	1.0300	-	0.0838	1.01	415.67	0.9382
Kuwait Dinar	3.2787	2.3246	12.2984	1.2361	11.94	-	12.04	4961.97	8.382
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0210	1.0206	0.9913	0.0830	-	412.06	0.9301
Lebanese/1000	0.68	0.4685	2.4779	0.2491	2.4068	0.2015	2.4289	-	2.2572
Egyptian	0.2927	0.2075	1.0978	0.1104	1.0658	0.0893	1.0752	443.03	-

Energy			
Com	Last	Change	Review
Brent	13.79	13.73	
W. Texas	16.17	16.22	
Bombay	13.79	13.73	
Dubai	12.83	12.73	
UL Gas	155.00	155.00	

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2667	0.4791	0.16276	0.39483	35.4396
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.48914	0.16618	0.40324	36.1847
KW Dinar	3.2787	5.88928	2.0012	4.85673	435.73
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.76417	1.81891	3.92773	352.485
CY Pound	1.9105	3.4313	1.1654	2.8285	263.81

Libor Fixing				
Period	1 - 3	3 - 6	6 - 12	1 - 3
Ctry	Month	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.6563	5.7344	5.8047	5.8297
GBP	7.4115	7.4427	7.4427	7.4575
JPY	0.5625	0.6250	0.6667	0.6875
DEM	3.6249	3.7734	3.8828	4.0779
FRF	3.6332	3.6406	3.7578	3.9375
CHF	1.5781	3.6250	3.7500	3.9785
ITL	5.4930	5.5090	4.8433	

Metal Prices			
Metal	Bid	Offer	
Gold (oz's)	298.5	298.9	
Silver (oz's)	5.96	5.98	
Platinum (oz's)	396	398	
AL (3 Months)	1397	1400	
CU (3 Months)	1764	1768	
Zinc (3 Months)	1111	1113	
Lead (3 Months)	584	588	
NI (3 Months)	5400	5420	

Libor Fixing				
Period	1 - 3	3 - 6	6 - 12	1 - 3
Ctry	Month	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.6563	5.7344	5.8047	5.8297
GBP	7.4115	7.4427	7.4427	7.4575
JPY	0.5625	0.6250	0.6667	0.6875
DEM	3.6249	3.7734	3.8828	4.0779
FRF	3.6332	3.6406	3.7578	3.9375
CHF	1.5781	3.6250	3.7500	3.9785
ITL	5.4930	5.5090	4.8433	

* JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.1591	1.1649	
DE Mark	0.3892	0.4012	
CH Franc	0.4776	0.48	
FR Franc	0.1191	0.1197	
JP Yen	0.6322	0.6349	
NL Guilder	0.3543	0.3561	
IT Lira	0.4048	0.4088	

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

# project in October

By Mohammad Ben Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government is expected to award a \$500 million project to build, own and operate (BOO) a power generation plant in northern Jordan by end of the year, an official said Sunday.

Ahmad Bashir, Secretary General at the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, said the project's terms of reference (TOR) will be completed later this month after the ministry qualified 11 international companies.

The 300-450 megawatt project, the first such to be run by the private sector after parliament endorsed a law ending state monopoly on electricity generation in 1996, will help cover an expected seven per cent rise in annual demand on electricity consumption between the year 2002 and 2005.

Work on the project will begin in late 1999.

"We expect to choose the winning company that will execute the project by late October," added Mr. Bashir.


The ministry will also select a consultant to assess the offers and negotiate with the winning company.

The project will be commissioned in 2001.

Mr. Bashir listed the 11 qualified companies as — ABB Energy Ventures B.V. (Netherlands) with SNAM (Italy) and Amoco (USA) — AES Corporation (USA) — Ansaldo Energia (Italy) with ENEL (Italy) — Bechtel Enterprises International Ltd. (U.K.) — CEA International Inc. (Bermuda/USA) with Sihle (USA) and Marubeni (Japan) — Electricite De France International S.A. (France) — Enron (USA) with Mitsubishi (Japan) — El Paso Energy (USA) with Black & Veatch (USA) — National Power PLC (U.K.) — South Energy Incorporated (USA) and Tractebel (Belgium).

ABJIAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHARISANI										
TELEPHONE: 627171 / 627179										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 09/05/1998										
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	14.9	1.23	75	2910	527368	177.00	182.75	
2.340	1.460	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.5	4.22	17	37693	61348	1.70	1.66	
3.540	1.250	BANK OF JORDAN	4.2	0.00	3	1454	1932	1.34	1.33	
1.300	0.880	MID. EAST INV. BK.	58.5	0.00	2	5200	4978	1.88	1.89	
2.680	1.600	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.2	8.81	4	4712	7539	1.60	1.60	
6.160	4.660	TRZ. HOUSING BK.	18.2	3.48	39	9836	56588	5.83	5.75	
4.180	1.790	JOR. TRAVEL BANK	9	0.00	9	10641	20188	1.83	1.90	
920	590	JOR. GULF BANK	4.0	10.45	3	6000	4020	5.50	5.50	
3.420	1.740	JOR. ISLANDIC BANK	19.3	0.00	28	34804	65348	1.85	1.89	
3.900	1.530	JOR. INV. FTH. BANK	10.3	0.00	21	171475	257246	1.53	1.61	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 252.04 %CHG: +2.26										
1.350	0.900	ARABIAN SEAS INSUR.	52.2	0.00	1	80	48	1.00	0.95	
2.400	1.550	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	6.0	11.63	3	12250	26033	2.13	2.15	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 121.43 %CHG: -0.12										
1.550	0.970	NATL. PORTFOLIO	42.7	0.00	1	200	214	1.07	1.07	
1.120	0.850	REAL ESTATE INV.	17.6	0.00	2	350	313	0.89	0.90	
1.480	1.060	MID. EAST HOTELS	P	0.00	1	100	106	1.06	1.06	
4.600	2.890	ARAB. INTL. INV. EDUC.	10.1	1.98	11	100	405	4.00	4.05	
1.090	0.900	ZAKKA EDUCATION	16.2	0.00	3	550	506	0.92	0.92	
1.830	1.450	UNIFIED CO.	6.7	7.24	15	3600	5502	1.51	1.52	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 115.00 %CHG: +0.34										
4.450	2.450	JOR. CHEMIST FACT.	15.1	0.00	31	13974	35426	2.50	2.55	
4.140	1.050	JOR. PROSPERITY MINES	31.7	0.00	2	3380	10106	3.05	2.99	
7.050	5.500	ARAB. POTASH CO.	27.1	0.00	2	1000	3600	5.50	5.50	
11.250	9.270	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.9	8.75	4	623	5385	10.20	10.20	
5.740	1.500	ARAB. FRANCH. MARK.	14.5	0.00	9	4150	21908	5.31	5.26	
7.200	1.200	JOR. CERAMIC LTD.	7.7	5.68	1	500	880	1.76	1.76	
2.890	2.480	JOR. PAPER CARBON.	13.8	0.00	2	1502	3665	2.48	2.44	
6.250	4.400	DAR ALDIN. DEV. INV.	6.6	6.36	2	1500	5250	5.50	5.50	
3.420	2.220	ARAB. ALUM. IND.	20.4	9.06	9	3450	9546	2.79	2.76	
4.600	2.890	ARAB. INTL. INV. EDUC.	10.1	1.98	10	405	400	4.00	4.05	
1.090	0.900	ZAKKA EDUCATION	16.2	0.00	3	550	506	0.92	0.92	
1.830	1.450	UNIFIED CO.	6.7	7.24	15	3600	5502	1.51	1.52	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 103.81 %CHG: -0.11										
GRAND TOTAL	INDEX: 171.38 %CHG: +1.39	456	521568	1319044						
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 09/05/1998										
N	1.050	910	EXPORT & FTH. BNC. 751	16.8	0.00	5	9280	6150	91	91
N	620	480	MCH. REP. NET. HATH.	27.4	0.00	3	4000	1988	150	150
N	530	340	JOR. TRADE FACT.	9	0.00	15	40354	16866	41	42
N	800	650	UNION INV. 501	9	0.00	2	10200	2575	75	75
N	620	360	ARAB FTH. INVEST.	7.7	5.68	20	27450	12275	42	41
N	780	610	AL-DAMLIYAH	41.0	0.00	2	7250	12075	67	70
N	2.220	1.050	CENTURY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	4	20600	33070	1.53	1.45
N	1.230	840	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	9.3	0.00	12	11054	1844	34	35
N	510	280	NATL. TEXTILE	P	0.00	7	2100	726	31	33
N	650	360	NATL. MOLT. ENG. HANICO	9	0.00	83	43165	190056	44	46
N	1.230	840	READY MIX CONCRETE	9.3	0.00	12	11054	1844	34	35
N	1.660	860	UNION TOBACCO 87.5	9.8	8.17	3	7463	10448	1.52	1.53
N	730	550	NAT. FRANCH.	7	0.00	7	11020	7480	68	68
N	450	340	INDS. ENG.	9	0.00	12	14500	3921	28	27
N	830	470	INDS. CERAMIC	13.4	0.00	12	1750	478	49	49
N	10	350	NAT. TEXTILE	P	0.00	1	500	150	32	30
N	950	550	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	9	0.00	4	1310	141	64	63
N	710	430	HATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	5	3050	1589	52	53
N	950	470	OFFICIAL HEARING 751	5	0.00	4	1900	849	88	60
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 293 590666 305104										

\* Saw 12 months low  
+ Stock dividend during the past 12 months  
N Listed during the past 12 months  
P P/E rate in 100 or more  
+ Negative P/E  
\* Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year





Hakkinen takes pole in Spain

BARCELONA (AFP) — World championship leader Mika Hakkinen Saturday swept to his third pole position in five races as the McLaren-Mercedes team continued their domination of the Formula One season at the Spanish Grand Prix.

The Flying Finn denied Scotsman David Coulthard a hat-trick of poles by qualifying 7/10ths of a second faster than his teammate as McLaren again finished qualifying 1-2.

Coulthard, who trails the Finn by three points going into Sunday's race, was unable to match the pace of Hakkinen, who went faster each time he was on the track to claim the fourth pole of his 101-race career.

Two-time world champion Michael Schumacher of Germany was third fastest in his Ferrari but was over 1.5 seconds adrift of Hakkinen's pole-winning time of 1min 20.26secs.

The Benetton duo of Giancarlo Fisichella and Alexander Wurz took the next two places, followed by Irishman Eddie Irvine in the other Ferrari.

Brazilian Rubens Barrichello benefited from a new Ford engine to produce his best qualifying display for the ailing Stewart team and took ninth place on the grid.

Jacques Villeneuve, the defending world champion from Canada, was only 10th fastest in his Williams while his German teammate Heinz-Harald Frentzen was back in 13th spot after a late spin.



Mika Hakkinen of Finland gestures in the pits during a training session for the upcoming Spanish Formula One Grand Prix at Montmelo racetrack May 9. Hakkinen took the pole position (Reuters photo)

Kuerten out of German Open

HAMBURG (AFP) — A double fault cost French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten \$47,000 as he threw away the chance of a place in the semi-finals of the Licher German Open.

That sum was the difference in prize money between reaching the quarter-finals or the last four.

The hapless Brazilian's only double-fault of the match came as he led 7-6 in a second set tiebreak against fourth seed Alex Corretja, and after he had held another match point at 6-5 which was lost with a wide forehand.

Corretja survived to level the match and claim a 4-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-4 victory after a two hour 47-minute struggle.

Corretja faces fellow Spaniard Felix Mantilla in the semi-finals. Ninth-seeded Mantilla benefited from a retirement by 16th seed Goran Ivanisevic, who was suffering from a respiratory infection and quit after losing the first eight games.

The Croatian was found to be suffering from low blood pressure but said afterwards he felt much better.

The other semi-final will pit sixth seed Karol Kucera of Slovakia against the unseeded Albert Costa of Spain. Kucera held off a bright start by the unseeded Thomas Muster to win 6-3, 6-2, and Costa beat unseeded Frenchman Fabrice Santoro 6-3, 6-4.

Fifth-seeded Kuerten claimed the opening set by breaking Corretja to love to lead 5-4, and then broke to lead 1-0 in the second set with a scorching forehand winner down the line.

But the Brazilian dropped his serve from 40-0 to allow Corretja to level at 3-3, and then after saving a set point at 6-5 threw away the chance of victory in the tiebreak.

In the final set, Corretja gained an early break and



Thomas Muster

despite some strong resistance from Kuerten, especially in the final stages, that was enough to settle the outcome.

"I just tried to hit a normal serve," said Kuerten. "It was my only double-fault, and in the third set it kept coming back in my mind. It's a big loss for me and my biggest disappointment this year."

"But every day I'm learning something new, and I have great expectations for Paris."

Muster was unable to maintain an impressive start, in which he led 3-1. "I think I started pretty well," said Muster. "I felt comfortable and had a lot of chances to go ahead 4-1, but lost my concentration and slowed my game down a little bit. My footwork wasn't as aggressive as in the other matches."

"He played very well from when he came back to 3-3. He can wrong-foot you, and he started playing more top-spin, high balls which kept me way behind the baseline. I didn't force enough. I didn't really attack the ball enough to make him rally with me the way I did in the first four of five games."

Kucera, who is coached by Miloslav Mecir and shows many of his graceful properties, admitted that Muster had placed him under early pressure.

The quietly spoken Slovak, who at the beginning of the year won the Hopman Cup and Sydney and was a semi-finalist at the Australian Open, now believes he has a chance of winning the upcoming French Open.

"Everything is possible. I wouldn't say I was the favourite, but I'll try every match and if I play like this for sure I can win the French Open," he insisted.

A single break of serve in each set, for 2-0 in the first and 1-0 in the second, was enough to earn Costa victory over Santoro.

WORLD CUP '98

Djorkaeff is the history man

PARIS (AFP) — Youri Djorkaeff enjoyed a small slice of club history with Inter Milan, but now the French striker wants a mammoth portion by helping the hosts to their first ever World Cup triumph.

Djorkaeff, like many top players, got his appetite for football from his father, Jean, whose own parents were Armenian, played for French first division club Lyon and was capped 48 times by France.

Djorkaeff junior was born and brought up in Lyon, but started his career in 1984 as a 16-year-old with Grenoble in the second division, spending six seasons in the foothills of the Alps.

He had already begun to developing his scoring touch before leaving, but in his first season with Strasbourg (1989-90), Djorkaeff knocked in a remarkable 21 goals in 28 games.

Snapped up by Monaco within a few months of the following season, in December 1990, Djorkaeff spent the next five years in the Principality, scoring 60 times and winning the French Cup in 1992.

His international career also began to take off, and he first caught people's attention in Italy in 1994.

France played the future finalists in a pre-World Cup friendly and Djorkaeff scored the only goal — putting the ball past the man who is now his club teammate, Gianluca Pagliuca.

Djorkaeff eventually left Monaco to join Paris St Germain for a memorable season in 1995-96, when PSG became only the second French club to win a continental trophy as they lifted the European Cup Winners Cup.

Weeks later, he was back on the score sheet as France reached the semi-finals of the 1996 European championships in England, before bowing out on penalties to the Czech Republic.

Djorkaeff made a promising start to his career in Italy, with 14 league goals in his first season — including an airborne scissor-kick against AS Roma which so impressed his new club that they printed a picture of it over the 1997-98 season tickets.

"I've gone down in Inter history," he said. "And that's something I'm really proud of."

This season, his skills have been harnessed as Ronaldo's strike partner, with mixed results.

"I really want to do well at the World Cup," says Djorkaeff. "There's no point hiding it, it will be the biggest moment of my career."



Michael Laudrup to retire after World Cup

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — Ajax striker Michael Laudrup, one of Denmark's greatest ever players, told Danish television on Friday he would retire from football after the World Cup.

"It's a very difficult decision, but I think it's time to stop and do something else," said Laudrup, who turns 34 on June 15, the week the World Cup starts in France.

"I could have continued for another season, but I wanted to go out at the top," he explained.

Laudrup, who is set to line up alongside his Chelsea-bound brother Brian in the World Cup, has won 97 Danish caps and scored 36 goals.

Over the past 13 years, Laudrup has won a host of major honours with Juventus (one league title and one Intercontinental Cup), Barcelona (four league titles and one European Cup), Real Madrid (one league title) and Ajax (1 league title).

Juninho unhappy at World Cup snub

MADRID (AFP) — Atletico Madrid's Brazilian international Juninho spoke Wednesday of his bitter disappointment at being left out of his country's World Cup squad.

Juninho, who starred in the Premiership with Middlesbrough last season but ironically left for Madrid believing that he would be more visible to coach Mario Zagallo playing in the Spanish, said he had been omitted for "tactical" reasons.

"Anyone who says differently is

lying as I have totally recovered," said Juninho, who made his comeback for Atletico on Sunday after a three-month lay-off with a broken leg.

"I did everything I could to be ready to play in the World Cup," said the 25-year-old, who underwent special fitness training following his injury.

And in an apparent swipe at Zagallo he said: "There are certain players who do not maintain good

discipline and yet bag all the prizes going. I am going to have to reflect whether it's worth having that discipline or not."

But he insisted his observation was not directed, at Fiorentina, star Edmundo, who has had several run-ins with Zagallo over disciplinary matters.

Juninho, 25, also said he realised he had to accept the opinion of Zagallo and his staff if they preferred other players to him.

Maldini steps up to the big league

PARIS (AFP) — Cesare Maldini is betting that nearly half a century in football will see him right in his first and last World Cup finals as Italy's coach.

Maldini, 66, got the top job in December 1996 on the strength of his track record at Under-21 level, following Arrigo Sacchi's resignation in the wake of the Italian fiasco at Euro '96.

Now he prepares for his first ever major tournament in the senior hot seat, hoping to repeat the success he once witnessed as Enzo Bearzot's deputy at

the 1982 World Cup finals in Spain.

As a player, Maldini enjoyed success at club level with AC Milan, but never really cut it on the international stage.

He spent 12 years with Milan (1954-66), winning the Italian league title four times and becoming the first Italian to hold the European Cup aloft, when his team beat Eusebio's Benfica at Wembley in 1963.

However, he was only capped 14 times by Italy in his whole career and he moved into coaching in

1967, in charge of Milan's youth team.

Maldini took over the top job from 1970-74, as Milan won the Italian Cup twice and the European Cup Winners' Cup once, before finally leaving the club.

After five seasons in the wilderness with Foggia, Ternana and Parma, he joined the national federation in 1980, and took over the Under-21s in 1986.

It proved to be a shrewd move as Maldini guided Italy to three consecutive victories in the European championships — 1992,

Nilis has the scoring knack for Belgium

PARIS (AFP) — Luc Nilis is the man responsible for Belgium's spot at the 1998 World Cup finals. The 30-year-old PSV Eindhoven spearhead scored twice against the Republic of Ireland in the two-leg European playoffs to seal Belgium's spot and, late in his career, has begun to emerge as an international striker of genuine menace.

Nilis, who started his career with Winterslag, scored more than 100 goals in six seasons with Belgian League powerhouses Anderlecht, but he took four years to score his first goal at international level. It finally came against Zambia.

Now, as he closes in on 50 interna-

tional appearances, he is likely to be a key figure for a Belgian side that have only once made it past the second round at the World Cup — when they made the semi-finals in 1986.

Some critics say the Belgian team is too old. Supporters say it is battle-hardened.

The strength in depth is obvious, though. Nilis, who scored four qualifying goals in all in just six appearances, is by no means a certain starter as the Belgians start their fifth straight World Cup finals campaign.

Belgian coach Georges Leekens also has to consider Nilis's PSV Eindhoven teammate Gilles de Bilde, Brazilian-born Luis Oliveira and Marc Wilmots

for striking berths.

Nilis, who is both powerful and an opportunist, missed the first three months of the current season with an ankle injury but has been in fine form since the new year.

He was a key man as the Red Devils won last year's Dutch league title — scoring 21 goals in the process — and the drop in his supply of goals this season may have played a part in Eindhoven losing the title to Ajax.

Nilis' early season absence could, however, mean he is fresher going into the World Cup finals than many of his rivals. The Belgian fans will certainly be hoping he lives up to nickname of "Lucky Luc" in France.

Jordan plays Asian Cup

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's Under-19 national soccer team Sunday plays its Syrian counterpart on the opening day of Group A of the 1st Asian Cup qualifiers which will be held in Beirut May 15.

The group also includes the Lebanese and Saudi teams who will meet later in the week. The four teams will play a one round competition to determine the group winner to the 15-team Asian finals in Bangkok, Thailand in October.

Fourteen nations are contesting the pre-qualifying round of the event divided into two groups. The finals will include 15 teams in each group and the best team from each group will advance to the final.

For teams — the top three finalists and the group winners — will then qualify for the World Cup in Nigeria in 2000.

The Jordanian team is just out of a week-long training camp in Egypt, where they were coached and lost another two

Hingis starts fast, e

ONE (AFP) — Martina Hingis preserved her unbeaten record against fellow teenage rival Li Na on Friday as she won the French Open women's singles title.

The 17-year-old Hingis, who was ranked 16th in the world, won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th.

Hingis, who won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th, won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th.

Swiss No. 1 Marti

match against Russia in the match 6-2 6-4.

how she plays, I'll concentrate on my match.

"I'm not surprised Williams' are playing on clay. They have to play on all surfaces."

The 17-year-old Hingis, who won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th, won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th.

Women athletes, spec

AL (AFP) — Victorious female athlete-grandee of the official Qatar press Friday said she will not allow women athletes and spectators to attend the 1998 Asian Cup finals in Doha, Qatar.

The 21-year-old Hingis, who won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th, won the title after a four-set victory over Li Na, who was ranked 12th.

The society is conservative but it is affected by the world. Qatar's Athletic Federation said.

However, we insist that the participants wear headscarves and the athletes were clad in outfits that covered their knees or mid-thighs.

The changes occurred only days after the ruling of the conservative Islamic court, which demanded a participation of women in political life.

Qatar's Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Thursday said before a major sporting event here, in Doha, that women were given access to the grand prix.

Qatar's Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Thursday said before a major sporting event here, in Doha, that women were given access to the grand prix.

<b>PHILADELPHIA 1'</b> Bruce Willis & Gary Oldman ... in <b>THE FIFTH ELEMENT</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	<b>PHILADELPHIA 2'</b> Robert De Niro & Sharon Stone ... in <b>CASINO</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00	<b>PLAZA</b> The biggest cinema production <b>TITANIC</b> Shows: 12:00, 3:00, 7:00, 10:30 p.m.	<b>CONCORD</b> CONCORD 11 Meg Ryan ... in <b>ADDICTED TO LOVE</b> Shows: 3:30, 8:30 Steven Segall ... in <b>FIRE DOWN BELOW</b> Shows: 12:30, 6:15, 10:30 CONCORD 22 ISMAILIA RAYE GAI. KAMANANA Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	<b>CONCORD 11</b> ABDOUN John Travolta ... in <b>SHE IS SO LOVELY</b> & still showing evenings <b>TITANIC</b>	<b>CONCORD 22</b> ABDOUN Al Pacino ... in <b>DONIE BRASCO</b> & still showing evenings <b>TITANIC</b>	<b>STARTING APRIL 6TH</b> <b>Don't Laugh Please</b> <b>We're Jordanian</b> Starring Hisham Yanes, Amal Dabbas, Rania Kundi and the group at 8:30 p.m. For reservations call: 4640155, 4625155
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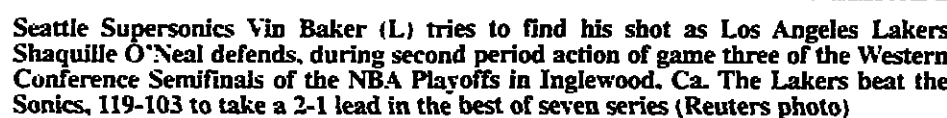


# Bulls back on top; Lakers lead Sonics 2-1

Taipei, Philippines

Lina Majdalawi had also beat Cyprus A and B teams 3-1.

Kukoc also played 21 minutes and had six points as the Bulls' bench outscored



Game Four is on Sunday in Charlotte.

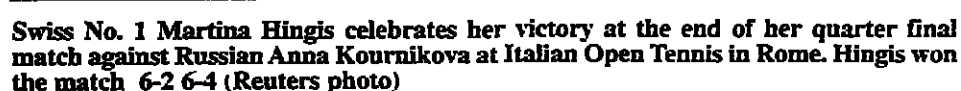
Ground floor, cons  
2 bathrooms, big kitchen  
Telephone  
Separate entrance  
Very good location  
**Please call**

Forum. The Sonics have lost eight straight playoff games there since winning Game One of the 1980 Western Conference finals. The Lakers host Game Four on Sunday.

**5711 — Fax: 5664256**

**ITION!**  
with special offer

## Women athl.



1. *Chlorophyll a* (Chl *a*)

s break record

she did not have to work out after her lengthy match with Kournikova. "I finished, but it was 30 minutes longer than I should have been out there."

Women were given access to the grand prix "thanks to the emir and his wife," University of Qatar psychologist Muza Al Malki said.

However, in neighbouring Iran, another conservative Muslim state, women have succeeded in tearing down some barriers and have already participated in championships organised in Asian countries.

But in Iran, the daughter of former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Faezeh Hashemi, has championed women's sports.

[illegible]

## T

### North-South vulnerability

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**NORTH EAST**

Dbl	37
4A	Dbl
Page	Page

Pass	Pass
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**Long lead: King of C**

cards had been broken

cards had been broken in games at the club, and Tamm had been ex-

turning had been expected to have negative cash flow. The sales were bolstered by a

us thus, when Tommy  
at becoming a man.

at becoming a master

---

the trumps were stacked against him came shining through.

Only a glutton for punishment would make a preemptive jump on the East cards — small wonder West pushed to the five-level on a distributional giant. Had East known Tommy better, the futility of the double might have been obvious. But West had opened the bidding and East expected to make at least one trump trick, so ...

West led his king of diamonds

West led the king of diamonds, then shifted to a low heart when East started an echo with the jack won in dummy with the ace. The queen of trumps was led, covered by the king and taken with the ace as West followed. A heart trick was conceded, and the heart continuation was ruffed in dummy. The seven of trumps was covered with the eight and won in the closed hand. When West showed out, the distribution became an open book.

A club to dummy provided the entry for a diamond ruff in the closed hand, and three rounds of clubs, ending on the table, produced the desired ending. Tommy was poised with J 5 of spades over East's 9 4 and a diamond from the board completed the coup, allowing declarer to score both trumps at the end and 11 tricks in all.



## G-8 ministers press for Israeli 'yes answer' to U.S. invitation

LONDON (AFP) — Foreign ministers from leading industrial nations said Saturday they hoped that Middle East peace talks in Washington next week would go ahead despite problems over Israeli participation.

"We all expressed our concern but we hope that these talks will take place on the basis of the U.S. proposals," British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook told a news conference.

The foreign ministers were meeting here to prepare the groundwork for next week's G-8 conference in Birmingham, central England, of the world's leading industrialised nations.

The United States was pressing ahead with plans for a Washington peace summit despite Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's refusal to make concessions ahead of the Monday meeting.

Mr. Cook said, "we are pressing for a yes answer" but refused to speculate on what might happen if the talks do not take place.

The White House and the State Department said Friday that Mr. Netanyahu had not given a definite "no" to the invitation to come to Washington on Monday after his spokesman in Jerusalem made clear the visit was unlikely.

"I'm just not aware that

there has been any definitive statement on Israel's part that the prime minister will not be able to attend a summit meeting in Washington Monday," said State Department deputy spokesman James Foley.

In Jerusalem, Mr. Netanyahu's spokesman David Bar-Ilan said "the prime minister won't be going to Washington Monday because it's impossible to resolve matters still up in the air" by then.

## Senators call for sanctions on firms dealing with Iran

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A group of senators has urged President Bill Clinton to impose sanctions against French, Russian and Malaysian firms who signed an oil deal with Iran, the Washington Post said Saturday.

Mr. Clinton is reportedly ready to waive the penalties under the 1996 Iran Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA), which the European Union warned could hamper efforts to expand trade relations and cloud the May 18 U.S.-EU summit in London.

"We understand you are approaching a decision," the senators said in their letter. "In the strongest of terms, we urge you to find

this venture in violation of [the ILSA] and to impose sanctions." The French oil company Total, Russia's natural gas company Gazprom and Malaysia's national oil company Petronas signed in September a \$2 billion deal to develop Iran's South Pars gas field.

The ILSA seeks to penalise companies that invest more than \$40 million in Iran and Libya's energy sector — both countries are accused by the United States of sponsoring international terrorism.

The letter, the daily said, was signed by 12 Republican senators, including ILSA's chief sponsor and Senate

Banking Committee Chairman Alfonse D'Amato, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, and two Democratic senators.

On Monday, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Stuart Eizenstat said he hoped the sanctions issue could be resolved before Britain ends its term on July 1 as the president of the European Union (EU).

Mr. Eizenstat said the Clinton administration was engaged in talks with the EU and Russia on a joint action plan that would seek to thwart Iran's efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction.

## Mahathir accuses Netanyahu of ghettoising Arabs

CAIRO (AFP) — Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad accused the Israeli government of ghettoising Arabs Saturday.

Benjamin Netanyahu's spokesman David Bar-Ilan said "the prime minister won't be going to Washington Monday because it's impossible to resolve matters still up in the air" by then.

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Mr. Eizenstat said the Clinton administration was engaged in talks with the EU and Russia on a joint action plan that would seek to thwart Iran's efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Ultra-Orthodox parties achieved a record share of the vote in Israeli elections in 1996 and form a prominent part of Mr. Netanyahu's governing coalition.

The Malaysian prime minister, who is himself a Muslim, was speaking after receiving an honorary doctorate from the Al Azhar for his contribution to raising understanding of Islam in the West.

He also signed an agreement with his Egyptian counterpart Kamel Al Ganzouri under which experts from Al Azhar will travel to Malaysia to help with Islamic religious instruction, embassy officials said.

There are currently 5,000 Malaysian students at the university.

Another agreement signed by the two heads of government provides for an exchange of technical experts.

Later Saturday Mr. Mahathir was due to attend a promotion by Malaysian car firm Werta Proton.

The firm is launching its 850 cc Proton Kan Cil on the Egyptian market in advance of the start of local production of the car by Egyptian firm Hashem Bus at a factory north of the capital.

Malaysia runs a large trade surplus with Egypt with annual exports of \$270 million.



REHEARSING FOR THE MILLENNIUM'S LAST WORLD FAIR: A Portuguese actor rehearses for the opening of the Expo '98 in Lisbon on Saturday. The last world fair this millennium will be inaugurated in Lisbon on May 21 (AFP photo)

## Egypt protests: Most wanted 'terrorists' performed Hajj

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt is demanding better security cooperation with Saudi Arabia after two of Egypt's most wanted extremists reportedly performed the Islamic pilgrimage in Mecca, security officials said Saturday.

Al Zawahri left Egypt in 1985 after serving four years in prison for his membership to Jihad. He is believed to be living in Switzerland.

Hamza has been accused of masterminding the failed 1995 assassination attempt against President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Egyptian courts have sentenced him in absentia to death three times.

Egypt is demanding that, should they return to the kingdom, they be arrested on condition of anonymity.

High-level Egyptian and Saudi security officials are discussing greater security cooperation, the officials said.

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Italian man blows \$600,000 on prostitutes

ROME (R) — An Italian businessman spent some \$600,000 on prostitutes in two years, said police detectives who unveiled a high-class prostitution racket operating in Rome. The unidentified man was questioned by detectives as part of an investigation into the racket, which enticed housewives and students into its ranks and which had wealthy clients. Based on the prices and the frequency with which he used prostitutes, we calculate he spent more than a billion lire over a two-year period, said Massimiliano Di Bernardini, the detective who headed the operation.

## Brazil police catch burglar with his trousers down

BRASILIA (R) — Brazilian police captured a burglar with his trousers down after he got stuck, half-naked, in an iron grille as he tried to break into a house. Globo Television showed Marco Aurelio Santos, sporting only a pair of white underpants, waiting for firemen to cut him free from the metal bars gripping him around his waist. I woke up at seven and was having breakfast when I looked up and there was this guy, stuck, said the house's owner, Eduardo Rocha. I looked and looked again, saw my sound system and called the police immediately. Santos had to tolerate the laughter of onlookers as he awaited rescue, and was not in a talkative mood. "Please, leave me alone. I'm already in trouble," he told a Globo reporter. He was charged with breaking and entering, Globo said.

## Zoo worker loses arm trying to pet lioness

BUDAPEST (AFP) — A zoo worker had to have his arm amputated after he was mauled by a lioness which he tried to stroke when he was drunk, doctors said Friday. The man climbed the bars of the lion's cage at Budapest zoo and tried to stroke the 13-year-old lioness, called Leila, which promptly pulled him inside the cage and set upon him. He was pulled free and immediately hospitalised but his arm could not be saved. Zoo staff said the lioness was not known to be particularly aggressive.

## After Eurovision chorus, the Irish dawn chorus

DUBLIN (AFP) — After an estimated 100 million people world-wide have finished listening to the Eurovision chorus Saturday, a groundbreaking radio programme will transmit a six-hour live broadcast throughout Europe of the dawn chorus with the stars being hundreds of birds in full song. The Dawn Chorus programme will come from a nature reserve on a marsh in Cork in the south of the country and will be available via the Astra satellite all over Europe. "What we are trying to do is draw people's attention to the fact that birds sing in the morning," programme presenter Derek Mooney said.

## Nice house, Jim

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Rubbery Jim Carrey of "Ace Ventura, Pet Detective" and "The Mask" fame, has purchased a house in exclusive Pacific Palisades in Los Angeles for four million dollars. His new home has seven bedrooms, two master suites, a chauffeur's quarters, tennis court, pool, two spas, a lagoon with wading pool, a waterfall, a pool house with a big screen TV and a sauna. It's all on an acre of land with a canyon view. His neighbours will include Sylvester Stallone and Linda Ronstadt.

Musa says G-15 has no mira  
CAIRO (AFP) — As leaders from the  
spring nations began gathering here  
Foreign Minister Yusef Mursi urged  
any miracle comes for the economic  
"We are not expecting any miracle  
of the meeting," but there will be a  
of the G-15. Mr. Musa said ahead  
the summit of the G-15 was  
a television interview that the G-15  
including any mechanisms to ensure  
currency collapses, bankruptcies and  
crashes that have swept across Asia. The  
to members after Kenya joined the  
groups Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile,  
Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, N  
Senegal, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

Volume 23 Number 6835  
**Islamists referred**  
*Lawzi: They we*  
By Tarek Ayyoub  
Jordan Times  
AMMAN — The govern  
ment on Sunday said it will  
charge eight members of a  
foreign-funded Islamist  
group for their alleged  
involvement in two car  
explosions and other arson  
acts late last month.  
Among Information Min  
ister Nasser Lawzi told  
reporters that the eight men,  
who were questioned in a  
major crackdown, told  
comparators they were  
aid the recent explos  
ions that went off in differ  
ent parts of the capital.  
However, Mr. Lawzi  
failed to name the coun  
ty that funded the group  
and said one of the eight  
suspects remained at large.  
Eight people, one of  
whom is non-Jordanian, of  
the nationality, who  
long to a foreign-funded  
Islamist group, have been  
detained in the State Secu  
rity Court in connection  
with the explosions, Mr.  
Lawzi said at a news confer  
ence.

At this stage, we cannot  
talk with or direct  
anybody against any  
body. But investiga  
tors show that they were  
training, and financ  
ing, and spreading  
the word. There has been  
a lot of talk about the  
trial. He said that the  
suspects were aimed at  
sabotaging the country's  
economy and its stabili  
ty in retaliation for its  
political stance.  
Mr. Lawzi said the group  
was trying to leave a "social  
and political impact on  
the country without harming  
anybody."  
No one was a  
of the incident.  
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**Palestinians increase pressure**  
Combined agency  
dispatches  
PALESTINIAN  
National Authority (PNA)  
said on Sunday to increase the  
pressure on Israel following  
a cancellation of a summit  
in Washington designed to  
ease the peace process.  
"It is time the American  
administration, Europe and  
other international com  
munities take the steps which  
are needed to prevent  
Benjamin Netanyahu from  
leaving the peace process,"  
said PNA spokesman  
Jeha Erekat, who said  
the PNA would not  
attend the summit in Wash  
ington on Monday with  
Prime Minister Benjamin  
Netanyahu and Palestin  
ian President Yasser Arafat  
had been cancelled.  
"We regret this cancella  
tion is due to the refusal  
of Netanyahu to take part in the  
summit," Mr. Erekat said.  
Mr. Erekat, who was set  
to leave for Washington, did not  
say he would consult Mon  
day with U.S. President Bill  
Clinton, Secretary of State  
Madeleine Albright, or  
any other officials. He said  
he was postponing the meet  
ing with the PNA's telephoned Pres  
ident Arafat with the news

Netanyahu t  
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## Aziz snubs Israeli journalists, raises colleagues' hackles

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Was it the questions — or the questioners? Iraq's deputy prime minister refused to acknowledge two Israeli journalists attending the yearly Atlanta gathering of contributors to Cable News Network's (CNN) World Report on Friday — raising hackles among other reporters at what is otherwise a journalistic lovefest.

In each case, Tariq Aziz, speaking from Baghdad via satellite hook-up, said he didn't like the question — but made a point of not addressing the questioner. Officials from Arab countries not recognising Israel often pointedly ignore Israeli reporters.

Tatiana Hoffman, a reporter with Israel's Channel Two television, asked Mr. Aziz whether Iraq would attack Israel with non-conventional weapons in case of another Gulf crisis.

"Further 13 per cent of the West Bank in order to advance negotiations with Palestinians."

"Tell me, what is your judgement on that?" Mr. Aziz asked Mr. Hansen.

"Mr. Tariq Aziz, I'm not a politician. I'm a journalist,"

Mr. Hansen chided. "Mr. Aziz knew he could face questions from Israelis," said CNN spokeswoman, Lori Konopka — and Mr. Hansen's gallantry was no surprise. "Let me use the historic opportunity to speak as an Israeli journalist to a leading Iraqi politician," Ms. Hoffman preceded her question. The live broadcast was fed into U.N. headquarters in New York.

"Well, Jane, I'm sorry, I'm not going to address this question," Mr. Aziz said, pointedly addressing CNN moderator Jane Arraf — although in other cases, he was happy to speak to the reporters directly.

It was an uncomfortable moment: CNN founder Ted Turner launched World Report 10 years ago to get broadcasters from different countries — some technically at war — to collaborate and learn from each other.

Ms. Hoffman wanted to know: Was it the question or the fact she was Israeli? Mr. Aziz didn't respond. When Ms. Arraf repeated the question, Mr. Aziz said he preferred to answer questions dealing only with the U.N. Security Council and U.N.

inspectors assessing Iraq's compliance with a ban on non-conventional weapons. Subsequently, however, he let himself stray from those topics with other reporters, discussing human rights in Iraq, and relations with Turkey — until another Israeli reporter spoke up.

Leah Zinder of the Israel Broadcasting Authority asked if Iraq planned on recognising Israel once peace agreements were reached with all its neighbours.

Again, Mr. Aziz refused to comment — and to address the journalist directly.

That prompted an angry journalist from the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, Bjorn Hansen, to ask, "In all respect, if I repeat that question would you answer it please?" Other journalists applauded.

Mr. Aziz answered this time, condemning Prime Israeli Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for not acceding to a reported U.S. demand to withdraw from a further 13 per cent of the West Bank in order to advance negotiations with Palestinians.

"The World Report is like a family," she said.



TRICYCLE TRANSPORTATION: Chinese peasants transport their grain harvest to a nearby processing plant in the suburbs of Beijing Saturday. China will host the International Congress of Genetics in August in a bid to increase grain production and treatment of diseases (AFP photo)

## Sudan says rebels 'evasive'

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The Sudanese government has criticised the southern rebel movement with which it says it made progress in three days of talks last week, but said efforts were underway to improve relations with the rebel's key backers.

Foreign Minister Mustafu Osman Ismail said statements made by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on the outcome of last week's talks in Nairobi were "contradictory" and "evasive."

The talks between a Khartoum government delegation and a delegation from the SPLA ended Wednesday with an agreement to hold a referendum on "unity or outright secession" for the south of the country.

For the government side, the agreement effectively resolved the 15-year-old civil war between the largely Christian and animist south against the Arabised Islamic north.

But the two sides set no date for the referendum, failed to agree on the area of the south

to be covered by the poll, and reached no accord on the separation of religion and state.

And the SPLA's spokesman in Cairo, Yasser Arman, last week branded the talks a failure, saying the Khartoum government had failed to offer anything new.

"This round is a failure and not a success," Mr. Arman told AFP in the Egyptian capital.

The Sudanese government is eager to bring to an end the civil war which has left more than a million dead since it began in 1983. War-related famine now threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands.

The SPLA, during the talks, turned down a government offer of a ceasefire, saying it should not be linked to humanitarian assistance for those facing the famine threat.

"The movement dodges and insists that no agreement has been reached, although this was indicated in the closing communiqué," Mr. Ismail said Friday, reported by the official Al Jumhuria newspaper.

The minister said it was

mediators from the regional bloc, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which had said there was an agreement, not the Sudanese government.